The Mahābhārata

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Translated,
Edited, and
Annotated by
James L. Fitzgerald

11 *The Book of the Women*

12 *The Book of Peace, Part One*



The Mahābhārata, Volume 7

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The relief sculpture on the title page, dating from the second half of the fifth century A.D., depicts Nara and Nārāyaṇa in Viṣṇu temple, Deogarh, U.P., India. Photo by courtesy of Pramod Chandra.

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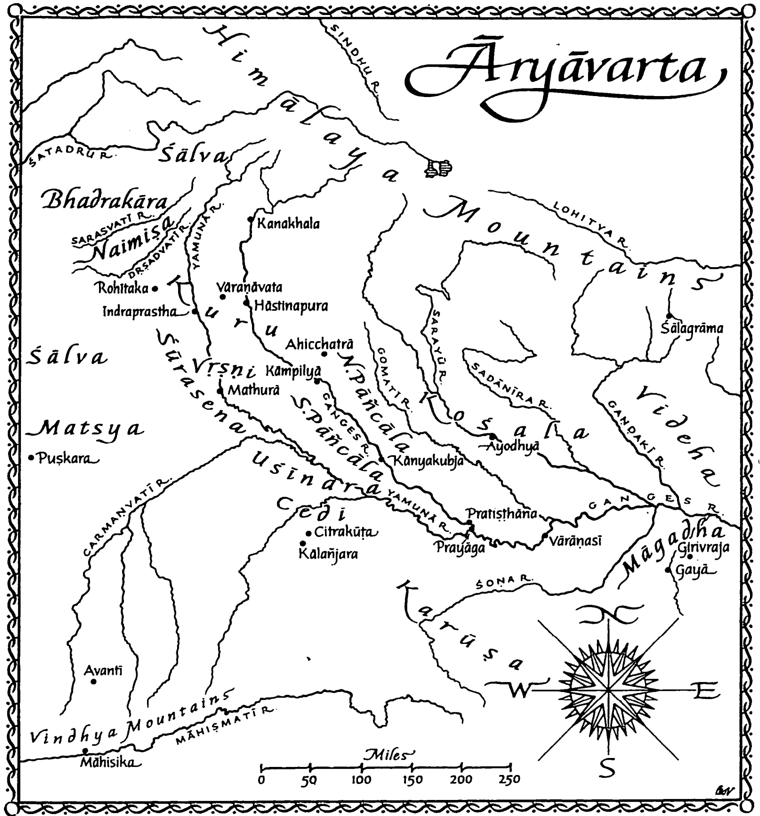
Erratum

An editing error at the University of Chicago Press resulted in a mistake in the transliterated Sanskrit in the dedication. The correct Sanskrit is:

> mātāpitror ahar ahaḥ pūjanaṃ kāryam añjasā

The University of Chicago Press regrets the error.

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Based on The Historical Atlas of South Asia, courtesy of Joseph Schwartzberg, Department of Geography, The University of Minnesota.

Preface

It is a great pleasure to send this work out to readers at long last. No one has been more eager than I to see the Chicago translation of the *Mahābhārata* resume publication, and no one will be happier than I that this book is now out in the light of day. The wish to continue working on the text, to go through all of it slowly one more time, applying what I have learned about it most recently is never-ending, but it is time to pass this over to others and let them improve and extend what I have done here.

My own knowledge and judgment about the *Mahābhārata* have quickened in the past several years as I began to ready this work for reading by others. I am particularly grateful to Professor Vasudha Narayanan, who awakened me from translational slumbers in the fall of 1995 and persuaded me to present a paper at a conference entitled "Whose Veda?" sponsored by the Dharam Hinduja Indic Research Center of Columbia University at the University of Florida in February of 1996. The large, rambling paper that burst forth for that conference, "The Making of the King: Brahmin Resentment and Apocalyptic Violence in the *Mahābhārata*," provides some of the framework for the ideas I present in the introduction to *The Book of Peace* in this volume. I have sketched these ideas more completely in my article "*Mahābhārata*," to be published in *The Hindu World.*[1] Necessarily missing from this book and that sketch is the comparison made in the 1996 paper that likened many contemporary Western academics and intellectuals to many ancient brahmins in cultural function and economic dependence. But while many contemporary Western academics and intellectuals feel themselves marginalized in today's economic "free markets," *some* ancient brahmins felt bitterly disenfranchised by new political and economic developments in the last

1. Sushil Mittal and Eugene Thursby, eds., *The Hindu World.*

half of the first millennium B.C. in India (as do some, perhaps, more recently). The *Mahābhārata*, especially in *The Book of Peace*, outlines one sort of answer to the plight of scholars and intellectuals who feel themselves disenfranchised, an answer that most modern Westerners and many Indians, brahmins and non-brahmins alike, must find too simply hierarchical and atavistic. The *Mahābhārata* argued for a cultural revolution that was historically successful in several important ways, though many thoughtful people in India and elsewhere differ about the good and the bad of those successes. I raise these larger issues here because I have come to see the *Mahābhārata* not simply as an ancient monument of bygone times. Many themes and motifs in this epic require consideration by thoughtful people of all kinds today, whether they are particularly interested in India and its history or not.

Now I have the pleasant task of thanking everyone who has given me advice and encouragement over the many years I have been working on this book. I am grateful for numerous comments made to the early versions this book. I am grateful for numerous comments made to the early versions by my lone Indological colleague at the University of Tennessee, Professor (emeritus) Walter C. Neale, and for numerous suggestions by Professor Patrick Olivelle of the University of Texas, who has read a large part of this translation in one stage of its development or another. Dr. Yaroslav Vassilkov of the St. Petersburg Academy read a draft of the translation of *The Book of the Women* and made several fine suggestions, for which I thank him heartily. Professors John D. Smith of Cambridge and George Cardona of the University of Pennsylvania also made several helpful suggestions on different aspects of the introductions. Adam Bowles, who is writing a dissertation on the *Law in Times of Distress* under Professor Greg Bailey at La Trobe University in Melbourne, Australia, has worked with a draft of my translation and provided a number of helpful suggestions. I am grateful to Dr. Julia Leslie of the School of Oriental and African Studies, London, for her thoughts on the problem of identifying the *rājahaṃsa* at 12.83.46. My wife, Professor Palmira Brummett, has heard and read many pieces of the whole and has provided much good advice regarding the English. She has also provided indispensable general encouragement, advice, and assistance as this project has stretched out across many years.

For various comments on smaller sections of the translation over the years as well as general support and encouragement, I am grateful to many Indological and non-Indological colleagues, whom I list in alphabetical order: Greg Bailey, the late H. L. N. Bharati, N. Radhakrishna Bhat, Henk Bodewitz, John Brockington, Mary Brockington, Denise Dipuccio, Wendy Doniger, David Dungan, Anne Feldhaus, Edwin Gerow, David Gitomer, Rosalind Gwynne, Rosalind Hackett, Thomas Heffernan, Alf Hiltebeitel, John Hodges, W. Lee Humphreys, Yasuke Ikari, Stanley Insler, Miriam Levering, David Linge, Stan Lusby, Philip Lutgendorf, Kikkeri Narayan, Ralph Norman, Marianne Oort, Sheldon Pollock, Charles Reynolds, Richard Salomon, Lee Schlesinger, Gilya Schmidt, Peter Schreiner, Fred Smith, Penny Tschantz, Gary Tubb, Douglas Twells, and Robert Zydenbos. Their suggestions have improved the translation in many places and I am grateful to have received them. Their encouragement at various times over the years has been more than a little important.

The Department of Religious Studies of the University of Tennessee, under the leadership of Charles Reynolds, has supported me patiently and with good cheer all these years. In particular, the secretaries of the department, Debbie Meyers and Joan Riedl, have assisted me on this project in innumerable ways. The Fulbright Foundation of the United States awarded me a senior research fellowship that enabled me to work on this translation for six months at the Central Institute of Indian Languages in Mysore, India, in 1988. I was generously received there and assisted in numerous ways by Dr. D. P. Pattanayak, the director, and his staff. The Graduate School of the University of Tennessee supported this work in the summer of 1986 with a faculty research grant. Grant support from the National Endowment for the Humanities in 1982–83 enabled me to launch the translation. I am profoundly grateful to all of them.

I owe varying debts large and small to librarians. First of all, my thanks to the staff of the library at the University of Tennessee, particularly the interlibrary loan department. The library staff of the Central Institute of Indian Languages was efficient and very helpful to me during my stay there in 1988. James Nye and William Alspaugh of the South Asia Reference Center at the Regenstein Library of the University of Chicago have been of great assistance at various times over the years. And D. M. Heilijgers of the Kern Institute Library in Leiden provided me with significant assistance during a visit to the University of Leiden. I am also indebted to the editors of this volume. Russell Harper, production editor at the University of Chicago Press, has consistently brought eminent good sense and efficiency to the numerous problems this work has presented. And I cannot give thanks enough to Nicholas Murray, who performed the highly complex task of editing the copy of this daunting work with keen intelligence and imagination and unflagging diligence. Needless to say, all the errors and flaws that remain in this volume are my own lapses.

Finally, I extend my profound gratitude to three scholars whose selfless work has, in the case of the last two, made my work much more convenient and, in the case of the first, made it possible to begin with. I am grateful first to the great editor of the *Śāntiparvan* for the Pune critical edition, Dr. S. K. Belvalkar, whose careful editing of this difficult text stands as a tremendous achievement. Professor Muneo Tokunaga of Kyoto University painstakingly prepared the first digital version of the *Mahābhārata*. His downloadable, machine-readable text of the *Mahābhārata* greatly facilitates research on the text, and I used it with gratitude for many years. Professor

John D. Smith of Cambridge University has added many improvements and typographical corrections to the Tokunaga text, and I have gratefully used his electronic version of the *Mahābhārata* since the spring of 1999.

The translation of *The Laws for Gaining Absolute Freedom*, Part Two of *The Book of Peace*, will follow in Volume 8 of this series. A draft of the entire *parvan* has stood complete for several years, but must be corrected and revised to conform to the standards I have used here. A preview of an important piece from that volume that has been revised to the current standard has been published recently in the *Journal of Indian Philosophy* (30.6 [December, 2002]: 641–77), "Nun Befuddles King, Shows *karmayoga* Does Not Work: Sulabhā's Refutation of King Janaka at MBh 12.308."

One late note on a matter that may appear confusing. The Sanskrit words most commonly used in this book and its future companions (*dharma, artha, yoga, śloka, pāda,* and so on) are normally given in roman type. They are given in italics when the Sanskrit word is being quoted from a text, whether implicitly or explicitly, or when it is the word itself, as a Sanskrit word, that is under discussion (as in the parenthesis in the immediately preceding sentence). In other words, when I am writing about the Indian entity called dharma roman is used; when I discuss translating (the word) *dharma* italics are used.

James L. Fitzgerald

Abbreviations

ABORI	*Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute*
ADh	The *Āpaddharmaparvan [Law in Times of Distress]* of the *Mahābhārata, MBh* 12.129–167
ĀpastDS	*Āpastamba Dharmasūtra;* also referred to as Āpastamba
Arjunamiśra	Unpublished commentator on the *Mahābhārata* known only through citations by Belvalkar or occasional notes of my own.
AŚ	*Arthaśāstra* of Kauṭilya; also referred to as Kauṭilya.
AV	*Atharva Veda*
B.	The "Bombay edition" of the *Mahābhārata*, represented by the "Citraśala (press) edition" of Kinjawadekar, with the commentary of Nīlakaṇṭha
BauDS	*Baudhāyana Dharmasūtra*
BAUp	*Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*
Belvalkar	Professor Shripad Krishna Belvalkar, the editor of the *Śāntiparvan*, Book 12 of the *Mahābhārata.* Unless otherwise indicated, any quotations or opinions attributed to "Belvalkar" refer to his section entitled "Critical Notes," at the end of the constituted text of each of the three *upaparvans* of Book 12, or to his editorial choices as evident from the reading of the text he established against the apparatus that accompanies it.
BR	Otto Böhtlingk and Rudolph Roth's *Sanskrit Wörterbuch*
C.	The "Calcutta edition" of the *Mahābhārata*, anonymously edited: *The Mahābhārata: An Epic Poem by the Celebrated Veda Vyāsa Rishi*
CUp	*Chāndogya Upaniṣad*
DDh	*The Dānadharmaparvan [The Laws for Giving Gifts]* of the *Mahābhārata, MBh* 13.1–152

EBCD	*Encyclopedia Britannica CD*
EM	*Essays on the Mahābhārata*, ed. Arvind Sharma
EMH	*Études de mythologie hindoue*, by Madeleine Biardeau
EVP	*Études védiques et pāṇinéenes* of Louis Renou
EWA	*Etymologisches Wörterbuch des Altindoarischen*, by Manfred Mayrhofer
GautDS	*Gautama Dharmasūtra;* also referred to as Gautama
Ganguli	K. M. Ganguli, the translator of *The Mahābhārata of Krishna-Dwaipayana Vyāsa*, P. C. Roy, sponsor and publisher. Ganguli was the translator and annotator of what is known as the "Roy translation."
HDhŚ	P. V. Kane's *History of Dharmaśāstra*
IIJ	*Indo-Iranian Journal*
JAOS	*Journal of the American Oriental Society*
JAS	*Journal of Asian Studies*
JIP	*Journal of Indian Philosophy*
KEWA	*Kurzegefasstes Etymologisches Wörterbuch des Altindischen*, by Manfred Mayrhofer
LCP	"List of Characters and Places" (Appendix 2)
Manu	*The Authoritative Teaching of the Laws*, by the traditional sage Manu: the *Mānava Dharmaśāstra* or *Manusmṛti* (generally refers to the 1970 Kashi Sanskrit Series edition of G. S. Nene; commentaries to Manu are generally cited from the 1886 Bombay edition of V. N. Mandlik)
MBh	*Mahābhārata*
MDh	The *Mokṣadharmaparvan [The Laws for Gaining Absolute Freedom]* of the *Mahābhārata*, *MBh* 12.168–353
MW	Monier-Williams's *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*
Nīlakaṇṭha	Commentator on the "vulgate" (= Bombay edition); see B. above
NS	*Nāradasmṛti;* also referred to as Nārada
Rām.	*Rāmāyaṇa*
RDh	The *Rājadharmaparvan [The Laws for Kings]* of the *Mahābhārata*, *MBh* 12.1–128
RV	*Ṛg Veda*
ŚB	*Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*
ŚP	The *Śāntiparvan [The Book of Peace]* of the *Mahābhārata*
TS	*Taittirīya Saṃhitā*
van Buitenen	The translation of the *Mahābhārata* by J. A. B. van Buitenen
Vāsiṣṭha	*Vāsiṣṭha Dharmasūtra;* also referred to as Vāsiṣṭha
ViṣS	*Viṣṇusmṛti;* also referred to as Viṣṇu
VS	*Vājasaneyī Saṃhitā*
WZKSA	*Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Südasiens*

General Introduction: The Translation Resumed

When J. A. B. van Buitenen passed away prematurely in 1979, he had translated about 40 percent of the *Mahābhārata.*[1] He had taken the epic through the long, slow beginning and the searing account of the dicing match, the leisurely movement—liberally spiced with crises—of the Pāṇḍavas' sojourn in the forest, the amusing and provocative inversion of the incognito, and the treachery, hubris, and wrangling of Book 5's march to war. Van Buitenen had taken the work right up to the threshold of the massive account of the great war, and he gave us too *The* Bhagavad Gītā *in the* Mahābhārata, one of the best and most useful presentations of the striking sermon Kṛṣṇa delivered just minutes before the violence erupted. And then silence. I resume the work here with the first of the major books that follows the account of the war, *The Book of the Women*, which is Book 11 of the eighteen, followed by the first half of *The Book of Peace (The Laws for Kings and Law in Times of Distress)*. Volume 8 will present the second half of Book 12 *(The Laws for Gaining Absolute Freedom)*. In the not-too-distant future, David Gitomer will issue Volume 4 of the series, which will present the first of what are known as the War Books, *The Book of Bhīṣma*, which is Book 6 of the *Mahābhārata*. And in a few years Wendy Doniger will provide us with Volume 10, the final volume of the series, which will include the last five books of the epic.

Some large gaps exist between this volume and the three that van Buitenen published, mainly the inevitable difference in the practice of translation between van Buitenen and myself, and then the gap created by the absence of the heart of the epic, the narrative of the war. As fascinating as the *Mahābhārata's* narrative prior to the war is, and as pivotally important as some of the episodes and instructions after the war are,

1. J. A. B. van Buitenen, ed. and trans., *The Mahābhārata*, 3 vols., published 1973–78.

the account of the war lies at the center of the *Mahābhārata* in some fundamental ways. No doubt many of us find this fact unsettling, or disagreeable, or deplorable—the authors of the *Mahābhārata*[2] themselves were ambivalent about the war, as I will argue later. *The Book of the Women, The Book of Peace,* and *The Book of Instructions* (Book 13) address the horror of the war directly and indirectly in sustained ways that cannot make full sense without the war narrative.

This general introduction to Volume 7 will try succinctly to help readers across both these wide gaps left by Professor Hans van Buitenen's sad death. I first briefly summarize some of the policies I have followed in translating the *Mahābhārata* and then give a brief overview of the war and sketch some of the final events of the war that are pertinent to Books 11 and 12. These two bridges are supplemented by several particular guides to the substance of the text,[3] the translation of the text,[4] and the physical layout of the text[5] that appear at the back of the book along with the

2. By *Mahābhārata* I mean a written, Sanskrit text which "precipitated out" of wider, mainly oral, traditions of epic and didactic poetry. I believe this written Sanskrit text was provoked by the rise of the Nandas and the Mauryas, and particularly by the "dharma-campaign" of Aśoka Maurya. I believe it was completed through a deliberate authorial and redactorial effort sometime during or shortly after the times of the brahmin dynasties of the Śuṅgas and the Kāṇvas (that is, after the middle of the second century B.C. and before the end of the first century B.C., though perhaps even as late as sometime in the first century of the Christian era). I sketch and discuss some of what I think are the motives and features of this first "*Great Bhārata*" in the second section of my introduction to *The Book of Peace.* I believe this written *Mahābhārata* was systematically expanded one or more times between its original, post-Mauryan creation and A.D. 400. Somewhere around the time of the Gupta Empire (from Candragupta I in A.D. 320 through Budhagupta in A.D. 497; see Kulke and Rothermund, *A History of India,* 81–91), a written Sanskrit text of the *Mahābhārata* became the basic archetype of all Sanskrit manuscripts of the *Mahābhārata* throughout India for the next 1,500 years, probably as the result of a major effort of redaction and promulgation, perhaps with direct imperial support. This archetype was approximately recovered in the attempted critical edition of the manuscript tradition carried out by V. S. Sukthankar and others at the Bhandarkar Institute in Pune from the early 1920s to the mid-1960s. See my article "India's Fifth Veda" in *EM:* 150–70, and Andreas Bigger, *Balarāma im* Mahābhārata, 13–19. (For a recent discussion of some of the limitations and problems of Sukthankar's editorial practices, see Reinhold Grünendahl, "Zur Klassifizierung von Mahābhārata-Handschriften." Grünendahl's study identified a number of problems and inconsistencies in Sukthankar's editorial approach, but it does not bring any telling argument against the remarkable results—primarily in terms of excellent "difficult readings"—yielded by Sukthankar's policy of using the Śārada tradition, and especially the coincidence of the Śārada and Malayāli traditions, as a touchstone.)

3. First, a note on the Sanskrit text and a list of all my deviations from the Pune text; second, a detailed list of characters and places occurring in the volume; third, four charts laying out the relations of the main characters (these three constitute Appendixes 1–3); and fourth, a glossary of the realia of Indian civilization that appear in the translation by their Sanskrit names.

4. A list of major Sanskrit words and concepts with a discussion of how I have translated them and a list of frequent English formulas used to translate particular Sanskrit words or ideas (Appendixes 4 and 5).

5. A discussion of the triṣṭubh stanzas that occur in the text and their classification and a discussion of the various aspects of the physical layout of the text (Appendixes 6 and 7). This

bibliography and index. Before presenting the particulars of my translation, let me acknowledge the impossibility of mending the profound solution[6] of continuity in the language and style of this work that was occasioned by Professor van Buitenen's death. This seventh volume looks like the first three in the translation series, and, apart from a few minor modifications in the format,[7] there might appear to be no difference at first glance. On closer scrutiny, however, readers will notice that many of van Buitenen's particular translational conventions are not reproduced here. Like van Buitenen, I anchor the translation of the Sanskrit word *dharma* with "law"-based words (though not as uniformly and thoroughly as he did), and I use the Anglicized transcription "brahmin" to refer to members of the priestly order of society. But I do not retain his "baron" for *kṣatriya* (I use simply the transcribed "kṣatriya"), nor his "commoner" for *vaiśya* and "serf" for *śūdra* (again I merely transcribe, "vaiśya" and "śūdra"). Nor do I translate *dharma* exclusively with "law"-based words. I recognize three different senses of the word, and I render even the most frequently occurring sense—the one I anchor with "Law"—by using other words such as *rule, norm, duty, obligation,* and so on, while avoiding combinations like *law-minded, law-spirited, law-like,* and so forth.[8] To try consciously to emulate another translator's style has seemed from the beginning to be a prescription for disaster. Each of us now contributing to this translation of the *Mahābhārata* must find his or her own voice. Differences of translational approach and unevenness of style will be a necessary concomitant of several hands working on such a great extent of material, but the resulting variation in styles need not be a major distraction in the reading and use of the final whole. The *Mahābhārata* is not a uniform literary artifact composed by a single author in a single voice, and the imposition upon it of a carefully considered and deliberate stylistic uniformity would, I think, be one more distortion of the underlying text added to the necessary distortions that constitute translation in the first place. Hans van Buitenen launched this translation and hoped he would be able to finish it himself. But in spite of his best efforts, the translation of the *Mahābhārata* did

volume departs from van Buitenen's practice by indicating in the footnotes the metric variety of any triṣṭubhs (and other non-śloka meters). There are some other small layout departures from the first three volumes as well, most notably the use of a small sign (the degree symbol: °) in the body of the translation to indicate the presence of a relevant annotation in the endnotes.

6. I learned this old medical term from reading Madeleine Biardeau on the *Mahābhārata,* and I use it here because in addition to signifying a breach or fracture, it connotes the rupture of an organic whole that can never recover its original integrity.

7. See the preceding note.

8. The translation of the term *dharma* is particularly important, and it presents special difficulties. I have outlined how I translate *dharma* and sketched my reasons for doing so in the list of translation formulas for particularly important or difficult Sanskrit words (Appendix 5). I have also made some extended remarks about the history of the idea of dharma in the introduction to *The Book of Peace.*

become the work of a committee. I think the final result will serve well in spite of that development.

This Translation

A great deal could be said, and has been said, about the principles of translating. I have nothing special to add to that discussion at this time, though I think I understand the urge that leads some to try to describe the process at length. A translator reaches out and is pulled two ways at once, and so is subject to a worrying tension. That tension seeks a resolution, and part of the fascination with the process of translation springs from and addresses that desire. But nothing anyone can think or say will finally bring about that resolution. In the end the translator must just do his or her deed and live with it. Rather than discuss translating generally, then, I briefly describe the major principles that guide my translation and discuss some of the problems that have challenged them.

My main goal in this translation is to make the *Mahābhārata*, particularly its postwar didactic anthologies, as easily accessible and intelligible as possible for serious general readers of contemporary American English, whether they are students of ancient India or not. The translation must therefore be as clear and plain and interesting as I can make it within the constraint of being accurate by a fairly conservative standard. Also the surrounding apparatus must help readers around the difficulties and technicalities of the text as much as possible. Ultimately, reading this text and following its arguments can never really be "easy" for anyone outside the circle of the elite who composed it and made active use of it in public recitations. The same may be true of many old texts; but our ability to appreciate many of those long familiar to us benefits from centuries of working at their understanding and perfecting the various apparatus available for entering into their worlds. We from the West have been aware of the *Mahābhārata* for about two hundred and fifty years, and though much significant progress has been made, we are still far outside this textual tradition.[9] My hope, however, is that this work will make the opening to the *Mahābhārata* somewhat wider and smoother than it currently is. Nevertheless, in light of the many difficulties that the *Mahābhārata* poses to all who try to read and understand what it is saying, no one will be surprised that after many years of work on the whole of *The Book of Peace* in the *Mahābhārata*, I have a keen sense of this translation as an intermediate result that is far from satisfactory.

9. See John Brockington, *The Sanskrit Epics*, 41 ff.

Policies and Practices

First Principles

As a *translation*, this work is one person's attempt to carry a text from one cultural and linguistic setting to another. It tries to give the "same text"[10] a new life in a new body. The conflict between the purported sameness and the necessary newness is the source of the tension mentioned above, and one reason for the difficulty of resolving this tension is that there can be nothing mechanical, nothing merely transposed from the one living body to the other. Translation constantly calls for numerous acts of interpretation and judgment, interpretations starting at the very lowest linguistic level and reaching up to the most complex and abstract levels of metaphysics.

With regard to the "sameness" that I strive to recreate in English, I consider the determination of what Indian philosophers called the *vākyārtha*, "the point of an utterance, or sentence, in a context," to be of paramount importance. The determination of the *vākyārtha* depends of course upon the words that are present, but the primary concern is to grasp how those words work together to form a single, meaningful utterance in a sequence of meaningful utterances. Reproducing the succession of meaningful utterances (the overwhelming majority of which are sentences) found in the original is the main goal of the translation, but—and this is the "fairly conservative standard" I mentioned above—I do hold myself responsible to represent in the translation the contribution of every significant word of the Pune text, every word of the original sentence that helps express and constrain the *vākyārtha*. The morphological embodiment of the words and their syntactic arrangement also create and restrain the *vākyārtha*, though in ways that are freer and more flexible than "words," which are all tasked to deliver their own particular semantic charge. Every significant one of the morphological and syntactic elements of an utterance must find accurate representation in the English. However, I do avail myself of the greater freedom and flexibility of morphology and syntax to express the same meaning in alternative ways. I do this to ensure that the text translated in English has a real life in English, is truly a clear and intelligible English expression of the point being made in Sanskrit. I always strive to find the most clear and energetic English syntax that verbal accuracy and fidelity to the meaning permit, and I try to avoid the

10. I have upon a rare few occasions differed from the editorial judgments of the learned scholars V. G. Paranjpe (the editor of the *Strīparvan* for the critical edition) and S. K. Belvalkar (the editor of the *Śāntiparvan* in the critical edition). See the note on the Sanskrit text and the list of departures from the Pune text in Appendix 1. These deviations are all clearly signaled in the footnotes where they occur in the translation, and they are explained in endnotes relevant to the passages concerned.

opposite temptation to inject energy into the English translation when the Sanskrit simply is dry or pedestrian, which, being truly didactic, it often is.

I have tried to make the end result "at home" in English as much as I possibly could. Thus I have rejected here the principle of another of my teachers—the brilliant translator and poet A. K. Ramanujan—who once said that in translation "the spirit kills, the letter gives life." [11] This principle may be always appropriate for some genres of cultural expression, and it may be appropriate for epic and didactic poetry in some circumstances. But I believe the *Mahābhārata* makes important and far-reaching political and social claims that we will miss, or ignore, if we fail accurately to sort out "the shared" and "the other" in its discourse. If we exaggerate and romanticize the amount and the degree of the "otherness" of other people's scriptures, we may successfully avoid their making any serious claims upon us, but we shall also run the risk not only of missing the point, but even of failing to realize that the text has a point. So, in my effort to make the *vākyārtha* as immediately accessible to readers as possible, I have rendered all important abstract ideas and concepts in English with one exception (the word *brahman*), and I have tried in every instance to make fully clear to readers the fundamental human sense that underlies the text's Sanskrit and its particular expression.[12] The *Mahābhārata* is one of the grand scriptures of the world, and its interesting story and important positions on major issues of the human community, while sometimes strikingly different from what is familiar or acceptable to modern Westerners, are not merely exotic confections to be sampled at the university's international food fair. The *Mahābhārata* is no more irrelevant exotic myth than the basic scripture of Western civilization, the Bible.

At the same time, I have no interest in disguising the Indianness of the text, so I have simply transcribed the proper names of deities and people as well as the Indian names for social groups, texts, musical instruments, plants, and so on. In general, unless the proper name of a person is obviously intended to convey some meaning in a given context (such as "Skinny" for Tanu in the story at 12.126 or "Slow-to-Act" for Cirakārin in 12.258), the proper names of people have not been translated, but merely transcribed. Numerous names for types of persons or things occur in the translation: the names of types of texts, such as Āraṇyaka, Itihāsa, Purāṇa, and Veda; of different kinds of people, such as the four social

11. Ramanujan made this remark in a class reading Tamil Sangam poetry at the University of Chicago in the early 1970s.

12. I realize, of course, that these decisions imply large philosophical claims, but this introduction is not the place to make them explicit and argue them. The task here is to demonstrate a convincing reading and interpretation of the text on the basis of these decisions. The success or failure of my rendition of the text will then have some bearing on the philosophical discussion.

orders *(varṇas)* of Indian society—brahmin,[13] kṣatriya, vaiśya, and śūdra; and of different kinds of nonhuman beings, such as Apsaras (which is singular; the [Anglicized] plural is Apsarases), Asura, Gandharva, Rākṣasa, Sādhya, Siddha, and Yakṣa. There are over fifty names of various distinctively Indian objects (the exact attributes of which may sometimes be unknown), actions, or processes that feature prominently in given contexts. Many of them form part of the technical context of the ancient brahmin fire-sacrifice (for example, *Bṛhatī, Sāma Veda, sāman, soma, sphya, Svadhā, Svāhā, uktha, Vaṣaṭ, vedi,* and *yajus*), and there are numerous names of tree and plant species (*udumbara, karṇikāra, palāśa, pārijāta, puṃnāga, śamī, śāla, spandana,* etc.), as well as several measures of length, distance, and weight, different kinds of musical instruments, and so forth. As I mentioned above, I have also used the transcription *brahman* to stand for the special sacred entity *brahman.*[14] I also use the Sanskrit word *yoga,* which has partially made its way into English, in a supplementary role, to lend extra, specific characterization to my basic translation of the word when it refers to the characteristically Indian type of religious practice sometimes called yoga, namely, the "discipline (or regimen) of (yoga) meditation." Apart from these two exceptions and the various kinds of names described above, I have translated all other Sanskrit words and concepts into English. In doing so, I have with some reluctance left many specially characteristic and fascinating complexities of the Indian world behind in the Sanskrit, while at the same time I have bent contemporary English prose and stretched it a bit to make it accommodate the *Mahābhārata*'s world.

I have also used certain regular formulas as my customary translations of certain Sanskrit words and phrases. In most instances these formulas are the main and ordinary way that I translate these items, though the words used are not reserved to these formulas exclusively. A list of the more common of these formulas, with an indication of what they are translating, appears in Appendix 5. Also, a glance at that list shows that I regularly employ "hieratic capitalization" of certain English words when they translate what I judge to be "hieratic" uses of certain Sanskrit words—that is, when the idea of the word, or that thing to which it refers, has some element of extraordinarily high, or holy, or even absolute, value

13. I follow van Buitenen in using this Anglicized form for this meaning of Sanskrit *brāhmaṇa* (and most occurrences of *dvija* and many of *vipra* and *ṛṣi*) to keep the word distinct from the term *brahman.* The form "brāhman" has some appeal—it is closer to the Sanskrit and would suggest to many the basic relationship between *brāhmaṇas* and *brahman.* But it may be easily confused with *brahman* by many. To insist upon the same literal transcription in this case as is used with kṣatriya and the other *varṇa* terms—that is, to use "brāhmaṇa"—would only be pedantic.

14. See the glossary of Sanskrit words at the back of the book for brief characterizations of how this word and those listed above are used.

to it (e.g., God for *deva*[15]); when it represents an absolute norm (e.g., Order [of society] for *varṇa*); or when it is connected to the ultimately and absolutely important layer of the world (e.g., Time for many instances of *kāla*). For example, I translate the very important word *jñāna* with "knowledge" ordinarily; but when I judge that *jñāna* signifies some kind of beatific gnosis or enlightenment, I give it as "Knowledge," thus indicating that these authors regarded this concept as transcendently important. Sanskrit *varṇa* is rendered with Order (of society),[16] and (Goddess of) Royal Splendor is used for Śrī.

Too Much and Too Little: Twisting Sanskrit into English

At a different level, the Sanskrit of the *Mahābhārata* presents certain systemic challenges to reanimation in English. There is a regular tendency to transform concrete objects and specific actions into abstract expressions that end up being distressingly vague and lifeless when translated literally into English. In most instances the abstract language has a clear, concrete meaning, and that specific interpretation of the abstract expression is what I translate. Another difficulty is that the typical thirty-two-syllable *anuṣṭubh* śloka (the basic type of verse of the *Mahābhārata*) contains a greater charge of information than fits comfortably in an English sentence. In addition to the basic sentence structure of subject, verb, and standard complements (indirect objects, adverbs, etc.), which present no difficulties to translation, the *Mahābhārata's* ślokas often contain one or two more

15. I follow van Buitenen in the use of "hieratic capitals" generally, and I also follow him in seeing the concept of *deva* as best represented by "God," rather than "god." While the *devas* were never seen to have absolute status like the God of the Western family of religions (or, with some important differences, like the monotheistic concept of *parameśvara*, Supreme Lord, of "Hindu" scriptures), they were still highly extraordinary and important beings, even in the post-Vedic *MBh.* I also believe that the juxtaposition of God and gods in Western discussions of religions is often an inappropriate theological maneuver by scholars with deeply ingrained monotheistic sensibilities.

16. The use of parentheses in discussing my translational formulas indicates elements of the translation which I consider part of the idea signified by the word, but linguistically optional in the English; that is, I use these elements in the translation if they seem useful or necessary in a given context and omit them if I see no need of them. In the main translation itself I do not use the parentheses and brackets that scholars sometimes use to indicate different sorts of contributions to the meaning made by the translator; such distinctions are not appropriate in a translation intended for general audiences. I do, however, use parentheses and brackets when discussing translations in the introductions or the notes, and when doing so I have tried to adhere to this somewhat subjective convention: Brackets are used around elements that I have introduced into the translation as a result of some substantive inference on my part, something that I believe must be an implicitly intended part of the utterance in order to understand it properly; parentheses are used around elements that I judge to be obvious, contextually implied elements or the linguistic complements required for the English rendering of the explicit Sanskrit. The main translation silently includes both of these sorts of translator's contributions, but when I feel the need to interpret the text to some degree that is beyond my regular level of subjectivity, I use a footnote or the endnotes to announce or discuss that need.

elements that are meaningful but which create a surplus of meaning from the point of view of English syntax. This "surplus" typically takes the form of epithets, attributive adjectives, or participial phrases attached to one of the main nouns; or it comes as a gerund phrase modifying the verb; or one or more vocative expressions may be either directed by one speaker in the narrative to someone else, as part of the narrative, or addressed by one or another of the narrators to someone in his audience.[17] All of them, even the vocative epithets, almost always help create a meaningful whole (by their underlying resonance, if nothing else), and most of them present critically important qualifications of other sentence elements. So these elements are not surplus at all from the point of view of the Sanskrit text, but it is often very taxing to express them gracefully in English. Sometimes they must be expanded into clauses, and these expansions may in turn occasion a division of the original sentence into two sentences.

All translators betray their sources syntactically, and the ways they do so, the degrees to which they do so, and the accompanying justifications are virtually inexhaustible. Connoisseurs of language and literature love to discuss words and phrases, and a leisurely discussion of some of my translational decisions, the different ways the Sanskrit of various passages of the *Mahābhārata* might be rendered in English, would be a great pleasure. But, unfortunately, this occasion is not really suited for such a treatment of the subject. Some will find various aspects of my translation too staid and literal, others will think I am often cavalier. And both criticisms may be right at times. This text bristles with problems. I have done my best to solve as many of them as I could.

Saving Face and Voice: A Few Final Details

Regarding the vocative expressions mentioned above, some scholars have argued that many of them are used so often that they are merely formulaic and thus dispensable when they impede the flow of translation. The occurrence of these vocative epithets as part of the *Mahābhārata's* frame, rather than as part of the narratives, is very frequent, and undoubtedly they played an important role in the storyteller's illusion, as well as

17. Only the thinnest, outermost frame of the *Mahābhārata* is narrated to us by a nameless narrative voice. That narrative voice immediately tells of a bard interacting with an audience and eventually coming to recount to them a recitation of the *Great Bhārata* by a specific reciter (Vaiśaṃpāyana) to a specific audience (King Janamejaya Bhārata). And within that tale, many times another person tells a tale to an audience, and that tale may contain similar tales nested within it, and so on. So basically the whole text consists of reciters retelling tales to audiences whose names and positions are known and form a significant element of the text. Often enough a śloka contains a vocative expression in which the person telling the current tale breaks out of his story or dialogue and addresses his audience directly by name or title, or with an epithet. Even within the main narrative, much of what is narrated is conversation and debate among different characters. The *MBh* is a highly oral epic in a sense that is not commonly stressed.

reflecting the thoroughly interpersonal and oral nature of communication and discussion taken for granted in the epic's composition. At the same time it is true that these epithets were also an easy way for a poet to fill up half a verse (i.e., a quarter of a śloka, the śloka being made up of two metrically equivalent verses). Nonetheless, I translate virtually all of these vocative expressions, even the routine "king," because they do express the interpersonal and dialogic quality that is fundamental to the *Mahābhārata* text. (At one level, the entire text is a long series of conversations and speeches.) Infrequently, when a vocative epithet is both thoroughly routine and makes a smooth rendition of a passage very difficult, I do omit it. Only the relatively routine and prosaic *rājan* or *nṛpa* (both are words for "king") or Bhārata (or Bharata) is occasionally dropped, never more complex "synonyms" such as *mahīpati* (lord, or husband, of [the] earth), *viśāṃ pati* (lord of people[s]), or *narendra* (Indra of, or among, men), which may echo strongly, or only faintly, in a given context. In a few special contexts, however, such as Gāndhārī's long lament addressed to Kṛṣṇa in 11.16 through 11.25, I do once or twice omit a *prabho,* (O lord), for the same reasons.

In a similar vein, because the text is so thoroughly grounded in face-to-face utterance, explicit statements indicating the beginnings and endings of speeches occur often. Whole quarter-couplets (at times even whole verses: "After he had been addressed this way, the seer Nārada, the best of speakers . . ." 12.2.1ab) are devoted to such speech-delimiters. As what I have been saying here implies, I regard such indications of the human context of the text to be valuable; in my judgment, it would be an error to suppress them systematically in this type of translation. Very infrequently have I abbreviated or, rarely, even eliminated these formulas from the translation to make a passage more smooth. Readers will find it helpful to peruse the appendices before they turn to the translations themselves; Appendixes 6 and 7 will be particularly helpful with regard to some of the technicalities of the layout of the translation.

What Happened in the War

Eighteen Days of Slaughter

The biggest gap between Volume 3 and Volume 7 in this translation is the absence of the account of the war contained in Books 6–10 of the *Mahābhārata,* which will be published in Volumes 4, 5, and 6. Much of what is said and what happens in Book 11 and the first section of Book 12 does not make much sense without a knowledge of the warriors and the events of the war. And the tremendous length of Bhīṣma's instruction to the new king Yudhiṣṭhira in the rest of Book 12 and Book 13 makes no sense unless one has absorbed the massive shock that an account of the

great war produces. No recapitulation can communicate the extent and depth of the war's horror, but the following brief synopsis might make it intellectually intelligible and provide the details necessary to understand *The Book of the Women* and the first half of *The Book of Peace* more fully. Appendix 2 is an integral part of my attempt here to provide readers with some sense of the missing war narrative. It lists all significant characters mentioned or appearing in Volume 7, and attempts to give readers some understanding of those characters as they are developed in the entire *Mahābhārata* that precedes Volume 7. The following synopsis presumes an awareness of almost all the basic information about characters that is contained in that appendix.

Only a few weeks' time separate the shock and mourning of *The Book of the Women* from all the embassies and wrangling of Book 5 of the *Mahābhārata, The Book of the Effort,* where attempts to avert the war failed and the two large armies were mustered.[18] Only a few weeks—but the last eighteen days were filled with mayhem and a spilling of the blood of millions of men, horses, and elephants that grew more intense as time wore on, until, late on the seventeenth day of the war, Arjuna Pāṇḍava ignobly beheaded Karṇa as that son of the Sun struggled to free the wheel of his chariot from the mud. On the eighteenth and final day, the energy of the war slowly ebbed until Duryodhana finally ran from the field and hid himself in a lake—to emerge later to duel Bhīma and be fatally maimed by Bhīmasena's foul blow—and the three surviving warriors of his army slaughtered Dhṛṣṭadyumna, Draupadī's brother, virtually in his bed, murdered Draupadī's children in the night, and even killed a babe in the womb (Parikṣit, the son of Abhimanyu and Uttarā).

The narrative of the war begins in earnest after Kṛṣṇa's inspiring sermon and demonstration of his divinity to Arjuna, which is recorded as the *Bhagavad Gītā,* and after Yudhiṣṭhira dutifully walked across the battlefield and took leave of his elders on the other side one by one.[19] The first ten days of the war saw the ancient "patriarch" of the Bharatas, Bhīṣma, successfully lead the Kaurava army in repelling the Pāṇḍavas. Then, in the evening after the ninth day of battle, Yudhiṣṭhira led his brothers across the field, this time to redeem the eerie pledge Bhīṣma had made to him to explain how the Pāṇḍavas would be able to kill him (Bhīṣma)![20] The "grandfather" advised his "grandsons" that he would not fight against

18. According to Uttarā, the Matsya princess married to Abhimanyu, six months went by between her marriage to the prince (related at the end of Book 4, *The Book of Virāṭa,* van Buitenen, *MBh,* 3: 128–30) and his death; see *MBh* 11.20.26.

19. Bhīṣma, Droṇa, Kṛpa, and Śalya. The *Bhagavad Gītā* is found at *MBh* 6.23–40, and Yudhiṣṭhira's leave-taking is at 6.41.6–8, 30 ff. This latter chapter is found along with the entire *Gītā* (and more) in J. A. B. van Buitenen's posthumous *The* Bhagavad Gītā *in the* Mahābhārata: *Text and Translation.*

20. *MBh* 6.103–4. The pledge was made when Yudhiṣṭhira took leave of Bhīṣma just before the battle began; see note 19 above.

the Pāñcāla prince Śikhaṇḍin, for the prince had been born a woman, and Bhīṣma would not fight against such a person. The Pāṇḍavas took advantage of this advice the next day: after an intense battle, Arjuna, shooting from behind Śikhaṇḍin, felled Bhīṣma. Because of his remarkable vow of celibacy, Bhīṣma had the gift of choosing his own time of death, so although he fell, he did not die. He lay upon the battlefield through the end of the war and far past it, having chosen the moment of the winter solstice to die. This first, relatively tame, portion of the war is related in Book 6, *The Book of Bhīṣma.* In Book 7, *The Book of Droṇa,* the level of violence and scandal rises dramatically.

Droṇa, the brahmin who was the main weapons-teacher in the Kaurava court, the former teacher of the Dhārtarāṣṭras and Pāṇḍavas alike, was consecrated as the Kaurava commander-in-chief and served in that capacity from day eleven of the war through day fifteen. Arjuna was occupied much of this time fighting men dedicated solely to fighting him, keeping him occupied, and eventually defeating him. On day thirteen, while Arjuna had been drawn off to the periphery of the battlefield by these "warriors sworn" to his defeat (the *saṃśaptakas;* primarily the brothers Trigarta), Arjuna's young son, Abhimanyu, skillfully penetrated the Kaurava line, but Jayadratha closed the opening behind him, blocking the four Pāṇḍavas who were trailing Abhimanyu, and cutting the boy off. Ringed by enemies on every side, Abhimanyu fought mightily and made them pay, but the lone boy had no chance against so many. Arjuna swore to avenge himself against Jayadratha before the end of the next day's battle, and he did—not long after he lopped off Bhūriśravas Kaurava's right arm as that one was fighting with Arjuna's ally Sātyaki and was poised to kill him. Shocked and bewildered by Arjuna's amputation of his arm, Bhūriśravas sat down with the intention of sitting there without moving again until he died (the act of *prāya;* see the glossary). But in the meantime Sātyaki recovered and then settled an old score for his grandfather by decapitating Bhūriśravas. Kṛṣṇa, who had pushed Arjuna to make the blind-side attack on Bhūriśravas, then helped Arjuna kill Jayadratha by deceiving everyone into thinking the sun had set and the day's fighting was over. When that illusion dissipated and the fighting resumed, everyone went on fighting after the sun had really set, first in darkness and then by the light of torches. Kṛṣṇa then manipulated the gullible Ghaṭotkaca, who was half-Rākṣasa—that is a flying monster whose powers peak in the dark—into fighting against Karṇa. Kṛṣṇa wanted to force Karṇa to use the infallible weapon he had acquired from Indra, and his scheme succeeded. Perfidy deepened the next day when Bhīma and Yudhiṣṭhira combined to lie to Droṇa, who trusted Yudhiṣṭhira implicitly, and thus demoralize him. The two Pāṇḍavas told Droṇa the lie that his son Aśvatthāman had been killed. In a state of shock Droṇa sat down beside his chariot with the intention of sitting there in meditation until he simply died *(prāya).* Shortly after he did so, however,

Dhṛṣṭadyumna, the son of Drupada Pāñcāla, born from sacrificial fire expressly to slay Droṇa in revenge, charged up and beheaded him.

The war was slightly less frenzied on the sixteenth day, after Karṇa was made the commander-in-chief. The major focus of Book 8, *The Book of Karṇa,* is Śalya's traitorous undermining of Karṇa while serving as his charioteer. The long-awaited showdown between Karṇa and Arjuna took place late on the seventeenth day of the war. As soon as they took the field that day, Śalya began praising the Pāṇḍavas to Karṇa in order to frighten him, and he kept up the patter, ridiculing Karṇa and magnifying Arjuna. Then, after a long day of fighting, as Karṇa was locked in his duel with Arjuna, Karṇa forgot the *brahman* weapon Rāma Jāmadagnya had taught him, and the earth swallowed up the left wheel of his chariot. Karṇa jumped off the chariot and desperately tried to free the wheel. Though Karṇa pleaded with Arjuna to hold his shots out of a sense of honor, Kṛṣṇa taunted Karṇa for some of Karṇa's own past unfairness, and he urged Arjuna to finish his enemy off. Arjuna decapitated Karṇa with a wide-bladed arrow as he struggled with the wheel.

Across all of Books 6, 7, and 8 run various episodes of Bhīmasena's battles with many of Duryodhana's brothers. Bhīma had sworn to kill the whole hundred of the Dhārtarāṣṭras, and, as the days wore on, he made good on that promise. Not long before Arjuna killed Karṇa on the seventeenth afternoon, Bhīma killed Duḥśāsana and made good on a second promise: to drink that villain's blood for molesting Draupadī in the course of the dicing match. Bhīma fulfilled his first promise and a third one—to break Duryodhana's thigh[21]—late in the afternoon of the eighteenth day. That last day's deeds are told in Book 9, *The Book of Śalya.*

Duryodhana consecrated Śalya as his commander-in-chief after Karṇa's death, but the war was almost over. Yudhiṣṭhira, who had suborned Śalya's treachery against Karṇa in the first place,[22] claimed Śalya as his to kill,[23] and around noon on the eighteenth day, he did kill his uncle. Fighting continued for some time after that, until Sahadeva Pāṇḍava beheaded Duryodhana's mentor, Śakuni. The Kaurava army was almost entirely gone, and Duryodhana fled the field. All the great warriors on the Kaurava side were now dead, except for Duryodhana, Aśvatthāman, Kṛpa, and Kṛtavarman.

The End of the War

After the killing of Śalya and Śakuni, the narrative spirals down to three final episodes of warfare, all of which have a presence in *The Book of the Women:* Bhīmasena's club-duel with Duryodhana; Aśvatthāman's vengeful

21. Duryodhana had exposed the thigh to Draupadī with a leer when he claimed to own her during the dicing match (*MBh* 2.63).

22. See *MBh* 5.8. 23. *MBh* 9.15.17

night raid on the Pāṇḍava camp (narrated in Book 10, *The Book of the Attack upon the Sleeping Enemy*) that killed King Drupada Pāñcāla's progeny, including the five sons of Draupadī; and the concluding face-off between Aśvatthāman and Arjuna.

When Duryodhana despaired and left the battlefield, he fled on foot to a nearby lake and, using magic *(māyā)*, he solidified some of the lake's water and entered into it, resolved to live there in suspended animation.[24] The war seemed over. The women who were in the Kaurava camp headed back to Hāstinapura, wailing with grief. Dhṛtarāṣṭra's lone son by a woman other than Gāndhārī, Yuyutsu, who had switched to the Pāṇḍava side, took leave of the Pāṇḍavas and set out for Hāstinapura too. The Pāṇḍavas looked everywhere for Duryodhana without finding him and returned to their camp. The trio of Kaurava survivors were hunting for Duryodhana too, and eventually they learned of his location in the lake with the help of Saṃjaya. The Kaurava trio then conversed with Duryodhana while he was hiding in the water, and they were overheard by a party of hunters that regularly supplied meat to Bhīma in the Pāṇḍava camp. The hunters informed the Pāṇḍavas of Duryodhana's location, and they hurried to the lake in high spirits. The three Kauravas ran far away and sheltered under a banyan tree. At the lake Yudhiṣṭhira and Duryodhana angrily debated the ethics of the general situation, and Yudhiṣṭhira offered to let Duryodhana retain the kingship if could defeat any one of the Pāṇḍavas in a duel. Duryodhana emerged from the lake defiantly, donned golden armor, and told the Pāṇḍavas to pick which one would fight him with a club. The entire party moved back to Kurukṣetra because it was a much more auspicious place than any other for a warrior to die. The Pāṇḍavas chose Bhīmasena as their champion, but Kṛṣṇa voiced doubt as to whether even Bhīma could defeat Duryodhana in a club-duel. The two fought after many accusations and insults, and each knocked the other down. Kṛṣṇa told Arjuna that Bhīma could win only if he fought unfairly. Arjuna slapped his own left thigh, signaling Bhīma to strike an unfair blow below the navel, and Bhīma soon hurled his club at Duryodhana's thigh, smashing it and winning the duel. Still in a vengeful rage, Bhīma insulted Duryodhana by placing his left foot upon the fallen king's head. Everyone disapproved of that, and Yudhiṣṭhira made his brother stop. Duryodhana then excoriated Kṛṣṇa for his conduct during the war, and a shower of flowers fell upon him from the heavens as he lay pathetically upon the ground. Kṛṣṇa justified all the unfair tactics he had recommended to the Pāṇḍavas as necessary.

The Pāṇḍavas then went to the deserted Kaurava camp and were struck by the amount of gold and other riches there. Kṛṣṇa mysteriously recommended that the Pāṇḍavas and Sātyaki stay outside their own camp

24. He would be *supta*, "asleep" (*MBh* 9.28.51).

that night and spend the night on the bank of the Oghavatī. Kṛṣṇa then traveled briefly to Hāstinapura, where, with the help of Vyāsa, he consoled Gāndhārī and Dhṛtarāṣṭra.

In the meantime the trio of Kaurava survivors had returned to where Duryodhana lay broken and dying of his wounds. Not giving up even yet, Duryodhana consecrated Aśvatthāman as his latest commander-in-chief. Aśvatthāman still seethed with rage over Dhṛṣṭadyumna's killing of his father, Droṇa; the war was not yet over for him. His final desperate assaults are the subject of Book 10 of the *Mahābhārata, The Book of the Attack upon the Sleeping Enemy*.[25]

After this consecration Aśvatthāman, Kṛpa, and Kṛtavarman, went off on their chariots to a wood near the Pāṇḍava camp. They huddled under a gigantic banyan tree, lamenting the fate of the Kaurava army and Duryodhana. Kṛpa and Kṛtavarman then fell asleep. Aśvatthāman then observed an owl swoop down upon the crows sleeping in the large tree and slaughter many of them. This attack suggested to Aśvatthāman that he do the same to the Pāṇḍavas, and he talked himself into doing it. He awakened his companions, and they were aghast at the idea. They debated the issue vigorously, and Kṛpa tried hard to dissuade his nephew, but to no avail. Aśvatthāman mounted his chariot and set out, and the other two followed him. As he approached the gate of the Pāṇḍava camp, Aśvatthāman saw there a huge and horrific being, which he attacked vigorously but in vain. He prayed for the help of Mahādeva and recited a hymn to that God, and then he offered the elements of his own body as an offering to him. A golden altar appeared, hordes of dreadful preternatural beings gathered around, singing the praises of Mahādeva, and Aśvatthāman then offered himself as sacrificial victim to Hara (Mahādeva). The God appeared to him, blessed his intention, gave him a sword, and entered into his body. Aśvatthāman set Kṛpa and Kṛtavarman to guard the camp's gate and he entered and killed Dhṛṣṭadyumna with his bare hands (depriving him of the warrior's death on a blade), Drupada's other son, Śikhaṇḍin, his grandsons, the five sons of Draupadī, and all of their attendants. Kṛpa and Kṛtavarman set fire to the camp. The only one in the camp who survived the attack was Dhṛṣṭadyumna's charioteer. That man hurried to

25. The *Sauptikaparvan*, Book 10 of the *Mahābhārata*, has recently been translated by W. J. Johnson: *The Sauptikaparvan of the Mahābhārata*. The word *sauptika* is unusual, and its meaning is not obvious on its face. Derived from the participle *supta* (fallen asleep), it signifies more here than just "pertinent to those who have fallen asleep." Of the word's seven occurrences in Book 10, one in particular allows us to determine that it signifies "an attack upon some who are asleep"; *jijñāsamānās tattejaḥ sauptikaṃ ca didṛkṣavaḥ* /10.7.48ab/. This sentence refers to the hordes of preternatural beings who had gathered outside the Pāṇḍava camp after Aśvatthāman worshipped Mahādeva just prior to getting his blessing and receiving a sword from him (Aśvatthāman was the incarnation of a piece of Mahādeva, and that God also entered into Aśvatthāman at this time; *MBh* 10.7.64). These beings "were eager to ascertain his [Aśvatthāman's] fiery energy *(tejas)* and see the *sauptika*." The word *sauptika* here is a noun that refers to the upcoming attack upon and slaughter of those asleep.

find the Pāṇḍavas along the Oghavatī and tell them what had happened. Aśvatthāman emerged from the camp at dawn, and the trio of survivors of Duryodhana's army went back to the spot where their leader lay, still alive. They informed Duryodhana of what they had done, and he praised Aśvatthāman and died.[26] The three mounted their chariots again and set out in the direction of Hāstinapura, near which they met Dhṛtarāṣṭra and the women of the city heading for the battlefield. They informed Dhṛtarāṣṭra and Gāndhārī of Duryodhana's death and of their revenge against the Pāṇḍavas and then hurried off in separate directions, fearing that the Pāṇḍavas would catch up to them. Aśvatthāman headed for Vyāsa's hermitage.[27]

In the meantime, Dhṛṣṭadyumna's charioteer had found the Pāṇḍavas and informed Yudhiṣṭhira of the slaughter of the sleeping camp. He and his brothers went to the scene of the massacre, and Draupadī was fetched from Upaplavya. Draupadī swooned when she arrived there and swore to sit in *prāya* unless Aśvatthāman were killed. She demanded the gemstone that was present innately on Aśvatthāman's forehead. Bhīmasena, with Nakula driving, raced off, following Aśvatthāman's track in order to find and kill him. Kṛṣṇa warned Yudhiṣṭhira that Aśvatthāman possessed "the Head of Brahmā" weapon, and Yudhiṣṭhira and the other Pāṇḍavas set out in pursuit of Bhīma. They caught up with Bhīma, but he refused to stop, and they all went on and found Aśvatthāman dressed as an ascetic, sitting amidst brahmin seers, in Vyāsa's hermitage. Aśvatthāman charged a blade of grass with the formula that made it "the Head of Brahmā" and hurled the dart "that there be no Pāṇḍavas." Arjuna shot a counterweapon capable of neutralizing Aśvatthāman's shot. The seers Vyāsa and Nārada then positioned themselves between the two weapons that were blazing against each other in a huge fireball. Then Arjuna, with great difficulty, withdrew his weapon, exhorting the seers to protect them all against Aśvatthāman's. But Aśvatthāman, whose soul was not clean, could not withdraw his without it rebounding and killing him. Vyāsa proposed that Aśvatthāman be spared if he would spare the Pāṇḍavas and hand over the jewel on his head. Aśvatthāman agreed, but as the weapon had to do some harm if not recalled, he directed it into the wombs of the Pāṇḍava women and it killed Parikṣit in the womb of Uttarā, Abhimanyu's widow. Kṛṣṇa predicted that though the fetus would die, the dead baby would be revived and live a long life. He then sentenced Aśvatthāman to wander the earth for 3,000 years shrouded with miasma. Aśvatthāman went into the woods, and the Pāṇḍavas returned to Draupadī. She was dissuaded from sitting *prāya*, and then she prompted Yudhiṣṭhira to put Aśvatthāman's gem upon

26. *MBh* 10.9.55. A number of northern manuscripts add, "he went to heaven and his body entered the holy earth." Saṃjaya does shortly thereafter tell Dhṛtarāṣṭra that his son had gone to heaven (*MBh* 10.9.58a).

27. This encounter is related in Book 11, Chapter 10.

his own head. Shortly afterward, Yudhiṣṭhira learned that Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Gāndhārī, and the Kaurava women had left Hāstinapura, and he and his party set out to meet them.[28]

My synopsis became more leisurely, and I gave more details of the action described in *The Book of the Attack upon the Sleeping Enemy* because these final spasms of the great war lead into and set the scene for the beginning of *The Book of the Women.* And as I noted, there is some overlap between the two books in describing the action of the three desperadoes who carried out the *sauptika* raid. As we will see shortly, *The Book of the Women* opens with the scene at the Kaurava court just prior to and simultaneous with some of what I have just described. We are now ready to turn to the first of the *Mahābhārata*'s books that follow the account of the war.

28. *MBh* 11.11.1 ff.

The Mahābhārata
Translated

Book 11 *The Book of the Women*

Introduction

"Duryodhana will perform a sacrifice with the blades of weapons, O Keśava, . . . and that sacrifice will reach its end when the mighty Bhīma kills Duryodhana. And, Janārdana, at the end of this sacrifice its purifying bath will be all Dhṛtarāṣṭra's daughters-in-law and grand-daughters-in-law weeping with Gāndhārī for their dead husbands, sons, and protectors amidst throngs of dogs, vultures, and eagles."

Karṇa to Kṛṣṇa in *The Book of the Effort*[1]

Karṇa's grim description of the concluding bath of the great Bhārata sacrifice of battle is a good description of the main theme of Book 11 of the *Mahābhārata*, the *Strīparvan, The Book of the Women.* This book picks up the theme of burning grief *(śoka)* from Books 9 and 10 (see "What Happens in the War" in the general introduction) and focuses upon the expression of that burning grief, principally by the tearful, bereaved women of the dead warriors. The bodies of the warriors are then cremated, and the women's tears turn into the soothing libations of water that wash death away. What remains then is for everything to settle down and become quiet, which is the main idea of Book 12, *The Book of Peace*, the *Śāntiparvan*. But the fire in the women of Book 11 produces not only the hot tears of grief. Gāndhārī and Kuntī both burn with more fire than the śoka from the war, and the pains of both these women—one the perfectly submissive wife, the other the unwed mother who abandoned her child; both mothers of boys doomed to die in defeat on the battlefield—raise several issues that point well beyond the immediate crisis. And in the final scene of *The Book of the Women*, the soothing funereal waters cause Kuntī's ancient, secret grief for her abandoned firstborn to burst out and ignite a special fire of grief in Yudhiṣṭhira. So *The Book of the Women* ends with a new crisis of grief that gives new depth to the *śānti*, pacification, that is the theme of Book 12.

Representations of war and the roles of women in those representations are profound and far-reaching matters,[2] and the *Mahābhārata* is one of the richest sources of such representations in the literature of the world.[3]

1. *MBh* 5.139.29ab and 49–51.

2. One excellent work that examines the many facets of these issues is Jean Bethke Elshtain's *Women and War*.

3. Alf Hiltebeitel has opened these issues up as never before in a series of articles and books that so far spans twenty-five years. Of special importance are his book *The Ritual of*

Women—or fundamentally important, femininely conceived goods such as land (the [lightly anthropomorphized] Earth); splendid and luxurious riches (Śrī, or Lakṣmī, both of which were conceived as Goddesses some of the time), or Royal Splendor (also Śrī, the basic emblem of kingship, which was often conceived of as a Goddess who was a kind of consort of a good king)[4]—provide the fundamental motive forces in the epic. And in many other ways women (such as Śakuntalā and Satyabhāmā), female divinities (such as Mṛtyu, the Goddess Death in 12.249–50), and conflicts and dilemmas that are grounded in general human sexual dimorphism provide the epic with some of its most marvelous and penetrating voices and themes.[5] *The Book of the Women* is an interesting and important construction in Vyāsa's[6] many-sided narrative argument on the history and role of violence in the service of the Good Law (dharma).

The *Mahābhārata* is a "myth of *avatāra,*" that is, a tale of the divine "unburdening" (the original sense of the idea of *avatāra* in brahminic Indian mythology) of the beleaguered Earth, who has taken refuge with the celestial Gods.[7] The *Mahābhārata* tells this story, narrating the divinely

Battle (1976), his articles on the Pāṇḍavas' (and Draupadī's) disguises in Book 4 (1980) and on Draupadī's hair (1981), his two volumes on the cult of Draupadī in Tamil Nadu (*The Cult of Draupadī* 1988, 1991), and, most recently (1999) his *Rethinking India's Oral and Classical Epics.* Details for all of these are in the bibliography.

4. For an excellent discussion of the ideas of and behind Śrī, see Jan Gonda, *Aspects of Early Viṣṇuism,* 176–231. For a brief summary on Śrī, see the annotation I have given for the translation of 11.1.31.

5. There is the irony of Bhīṣma's celibacy, undertaken so that his father, Śaṃtanu, now alienated from his first wife, the river Goddess Gaṅgā, could marry a woman of the Yamunā, Satyavatī. There is Pāṇḍu's forced celibacy, necessitating Kuntī's liaisons with Gods to produce sons for him. There is the powerful and deeply searching story of Ambā (a woman severely injured by Bhīṣma's pursuing an accepted kṣatriya method of procuring women by rape—for his stepbrother!), which demonstrates (though it is not unique in Indian civilization) a profound awareness in ancient India that human sexual dimorphism is not simple and absolute in nature. And, pointing into the same twilight, there is Arjuna's highly ironic disguise as a eunuch during the Pāṇḍavas' incognito year in the Matsya kingdom (this persona of Arjuna's and its connections to the thematic androgyny of Śiva is brilliantly discussed by Alf Hiltebeitel in "Śiva, the Goddess, and the Disguises of the Pāṇḍavas and Draupadī").

6. According to the *MBh,* Vyāsa, a seer who is a main character in the epic, is the author of the entire epic, and I invoke his name as the author when I wish to refer to what I take to be the main voice or apparent authorial intention of the epic as a whole. Vyāsa, a mythic figure, is the main fountainhead of Brahminic tradition in the post-Vedic age. The name Vyāsa (divider, diffuser) is based in part on the idea that Vyāsa "divided" the formerly unitary Veda into four Vedas to facilitate the diminished capacities of men of the later ages, well past the golden era of creation. He similarly "spread" the wisdom of the Vedas to women and śūdras (not eligible to study the real Vedas) in a so-called Fifth Veda of his own composition. Limited at first to the *Mahābhārata,* the idea of the Fifth Veda came to be applied to Purāṇas and many other sacred texts of India. See my "India's Fifth Veda"; and John Carman and Vasudha Narayanan, *The Tamil Veda.*

7. See Paul Hacker, "Zur Entwicklung der Avatāralehre." For the basic statement of this "hidden understanding" of the *MBh* narrative (it is a "secret of the Gods," *rahasyam . . . devānām,* 1.58.3ab), see Chapters 58–60 of Book 1, *The Book of the Beginning,* especially

planned purging from the Earth a demonic *kṣatra* (the stratum of society that wields arms) and the subsequent chartering of proper, *brāhmaṇya* kingship (that is, kingship amenable to the principles and institutions defined by the carriers of the *brahman,* the holy Veda; that is, *brāhmaṇa* men, "brahmins").[8] Draupadī in the *Mahābhārata* is an incarnation of Śrī; she was born directly from the earthen altar during a sacrifice. As soon as she was born, a bodiless voice announced, "This most splendid of all women, this Dark One *(kṛṣṇā)* will tend to lead the *kṣatra* to destruction. She with her lovely figure will in time do the business of the Gods. Because of her, a tremendous danger for kṣatriyas will develop."[9] As the Goddess Śrī, Draupadī represents the divine wife of the good king, the brilliant indication of his success and, it was hoped, an ever-productive source of his riches and of the prosperity of his kingdom and subjects. The threat Draupadī posed to the *kṣatra* in the *Mahābhārata* was, in the first place, the temptation she constituted for the demonic Kauravas—who did succumb and lay rough, leering hands upon her, abusing her sexually in an attempt to enslave her—and then the motivation for the vengeance of her husbands the Pāṇḍavas, which did lead to the great sacrifice of battle on Kurukṣetra. *The Book of the Women* does tell the story of a bath of tears at the conclusion of this great holocaust of the *kṣatra,* and in doing so it gives a genuinely moving representation of the pain, sorrow, and loss ancient Indian women and others must have felt when battles were done. But the picture of women it presents fits into the *Mahābhārata's* general assumptions of the place of women in the psychology of warfare. It demonstrates the ordinary connection between men, women, and battle that seems to have been taken for granted in most of the *Mahābhārata,* and one that was explicitly expressed in the authoritative traditions teaching dharma: The relationship between men and women is one in which men are responsible for the *rakṣaṇa* of women (*rakṣaṇa* fundamentally signifies "defense, protection, and guarding; keeping something safe from outside threats"; but the word also slides over into notions of "preserving, maintaining, or keeping something as it is, or as one wants or needs it to be"). As *The Book of the Women* powerfully represents the expression of the grief we expect at this juncture of a war narrative, it just as powerfully represents the ideas and themes about women and the important female realities of the world that informed Indian conceptions of kingship, family, and the epic about two thousand years ago.

1.58.30–59.7, van Buitenen, 1: 136 ff. This sense of the word *avatāra* is earlier than and somewhat different from the sense of the "descent of Viṣṇu" that does appear in the *MBh* and becomes widespread in the Purāṇas; this later sense is the one Madeleine Biardeau develops extensively in her *Études de mythologie hindoue (EMH).*

8. That is, kingship that abides by the appropriately qualified brahmin elite's formulations of what is dharma, that is, of what is "right" for people, first of all the king, to do.

9. *MBh* 1.155.44–45.

The Bath of Tears

Kurukṣetra, the Progenitor's Northern Altar

On the morning after the eighteenth and final day of the war, Dhṛtarāṣṭra led all the Kaurava women of Hāstinapura out of the city to Kurukṣetra, "Prajāpati's northern altar," where the Gods once offered sacrifice, a rich sacrifice, and where King Kuru, a Bharata king of the past, had plowed a "field" *(kṣetra)* on which men would die and go to heaven.[10] "Hitch up my chariot," Dhṛtarāṣṭra told his bard Saṃjaya, and then he ordered Vidura, his low-born brother, who was an incarnation of the God Dharma, to bring his wife Gāndhārī and all the Bharata women right away.[11] The text tells us next that when the anguished women met the blind old king, "they were filled with intense grief, and upon greeting each other they shrieked violently."[12] Vidura calmed them down and got them onto wagons, and they went out of the city. The *Mahābhārata's* description of their exit from the city is interesting in itself and also for the way it represents the Kaurava women leaving the city:

> A loud wail went up in all the houses of the Kurus. The whole city, including the children, was riven with grief. Women whose lords had been killed were now in the gaze of common men—women whom not even the hosts of the Gods had ever seen! Having set their lovely tresses free to fly[13] and taken off their ornaments, those women, clad only in simple shifts, ran to and fro helplessly. They emerged from houses that looked like snow-capped mountains, like does leaving secluded mountain valleys when the leader of their herd has been killed. Several groups of distraught women in the throes of grief ran about as if they were in the girls' yard; and holding onto each others' arms, they wept for their sons, brothers, and fathers—it was as if they were acting out the destruction of the world at the end of an Age. Babbling and crying, running hither and thither, they were out of their minds with grief and had no sense of propriety. Young women who used to be modest even before their friends now appeared shamelessly before their mothers-in-law in simple shifts. Women who earlier had comforted each other in the most trifling sorrows now ignored each other staggering about in grief.
>
> The king, in shock amidst thousands of these women wailing, went out of the city straight for the field of battle. Artisans, merchants, vaiśyas, and those that live doing any and every kind of job all went out from the city behind the king. The clamor of all those afflicted women

10. See the LCP, s.v. "Kurukṣetra," and the story of King Kuru's Field in *MBh* 9.52.
11. *MBh* 11.9.2cd–3ab. 12. *MBh* 11.9.6.
13. See the first note to this passage (11.9.10) in the endnotes to Book 11 for a brief indication of the significance of the women's loosened hair.

> bewailing the destruction of the Kurus became tremendous and shook the worlds. They were like beings on fire when the end of an Age has arrived. The creatures there thought, "The end must be upon us!" The people of the city were shrieking loudly. They had been very devoted to the Kurus, great king, and they were devastated at their destruction.[14]

The text describes the great pain and agitation of the women very forcefully—their wailing "shook the worlds," and they were "like beings on fire" as at the end of an Age. And it gives us a basic profile of the women apart from and prior to their suffering this devastation: these were privileged, wealthy women who had lived secluded lives in very large houses, and it was painfully remarkable they should parade through the city and suffer the gaze of common men. Also, they had lived in a (partly) sexually segregated world with strongly defined ranks based on generation-differentials. Now, we are told, they are confused to be out in the open, like does without the leader of their herd, and the bonds of solidarity and rank are gone for the moment.

Vyāsa gives us another interesting picture of these women as their party, headed for Kurukṣetra, encountered the Pāṇḍava party along the bank of the Gaṅgā. Yudhiṣṭhira, shortly after having survived the hair-raising confrontation with Aśvatthāman,[15] had set out to intercept Dhṛtarāṣṭra and Gāndhārī on their way. As he came upon the Kaurava party,

> Yudhiṣṭhira saw along the river Gaṅgā throngs of women shrieking like ospreys. The king [Dhṛtarāṣṭra] was surrounded by thousands of these tormented women with their arms up in the air, wailing and uttering fair and foul alike. "How can there be a king who knows Meritorious Law and at the same time the unprecedented cruelty that he slew his fathers, brothers, teachers, sons, and friends? How did you keep your mind, strong-armed prince, once you had caused Droṇa's death, and your grandfather Bhīṣma's, or even after you killed Jayadratha? What shall you do with kingship, Bhārata, when you don't see your fathers and your brothers? And the unassailable Abhimanyu? And Draupadī's boys?"
>
> The strong-armed Yudhiṣṭhira, the King of Law, went past all those women screeching like ospreys and paid homage to his eldest father [Dhṛtarāṣṭra].[16]

In favorable circumstances ospreys nest in large colonies near lakes and rivers, and they are famous as raucous and fierce defenders of their nests.[17]

14. *MBh* 11.9.8–21.
15. See "The End of the War" in "What Happened in the War" in the general introduction.
16. *MBh* 11.11.5–10.
17. For more on the frequent comparison of women to ospreys, see the endnotes to *MBh* 11.11.5.

And the women are not only compared with screeching ospreys for their loud and aggressive demonstrations, but the issues they raise are "nest-issues": "How did you keep your mind, strong-armed prince, once you had caused the death" of your teacher, grandfather, Jayadratha (the one brother-in-law of these women; the husband of Gāndhārī's one daughter), and your children?

When the text describes the party's arrival at the battlefield and the horrified attempts of the women to locate the bodies and body-parts of their men, it finds a number of different ways to represent their extreme distress.

> When those women ... reached Kuru's Field they saw their sons, brothers, fathers, and husbands who had been killed there being eaten by all the different flesh-eaters—jackals, jungle crows, crows, goblins, Piśācas, and night-prowling Rākṣasas. . . . [T]he women were shrieking loudly as they descended from their fancy wagons. [They] . . . were stricken with pain as they looked upon a sight they had never seen before. Some stumbled about amidst the bodies and others dropped to the ground. These women were in shock and helpless and they lost their wits—vast was the wretchedness of the women of the Pāñcālas and the Kurus.[18]

Virtually all of the *Mahābhārata's* account of this episode is narrated by Gāndhārī, who has a "divine eye" with which she can see things far away as if they were near.[19] She is at the battlefield too and "sees" the bodies of Duryodhana and several of her other sons. But the main thing she does while there is narrate the whole grisly, sorrowful scene to Kṛṣṇa Vāsudeva.

> The daughter of Subala [Gāndhārī], who knew Law, looked over the grotesque battlefield where those women out of their minds with misery made a clamorous din. Having seen the slaughter of the Kurus, she greeted the Supreme Person, Puṇḍarīkākṣa [Kṛṣṇa], and she said this to him out of her suffering. "Look, Puṇḍarīkākṣa, at all my daughters-in-law whose lords have been killed, their hair disheveled, shrieking like ospreys! O Mādhava! They arrived all together, recalling sons, brothers, fathers, and husbands; now one by one they run to those bulls of the Bharatas. O strong-armed man, this field is covered with the mothers of heroes whose sons have been killed. In other places it is thronged with heroes' wives whose mighty men are dead."[20]

18. Most of *MBh* 11.16.11–15.
19. Readers should remember that Gāndhārī has worn a strip of cloth over her eyes from the time of her wedding to the blind Dhṛtarāṣṭra (see *MBh* 1.103.12–13, van Buitenen, 1: 240; the passage is quoted in the endnote to *MBh* 11.15.6). This divine eye is not only a marvelous gift, it is the only means by which she can see while still observing her wifely vow. There will be more on these matters shortly.
20. *MBh* 11.16.16–20.

In what is obviously a speech carefully constructed as written poetry, Gāndhārī's general description of the entire scene goes on at some length before she spots Duryodhana's body and lapses into her own personal grief. After lamenting Duryodhana's sorry career, his mother continues to survey the field, noting first one warrior and then another as she describes all the main heroes lying there. Gāndhārī's initial survey of the whole scene ends with interesting summary observations.

> The earth is so muddy with flesh and blood one can scarcely move upon it. Those women beyond reproach, unaccustomed to such miseries, now sink into misery as they drop to the earth littered with brothers, fathers, and sons. Janārdana, look at the many clusters of Dhṛtarāṣṭra's daughters-in-law, like herds of fillies with beautiful manes.[21] What could be more painful to me than this, Keśava, that all these women present themselves in such extreme forms. Obviously I did evil in earlier births, Keśava, since I now behold my sons, grandsons, and brother [Śakuni] killed.[22]

Her account has repeatedly stressed, as Vyāsa had pointed out before, the terrible incongruities between the lives of these women and the grotesque horror on this "altar of the Progenitor." She dwells upon the horrors of the scene and the pain it causes her delicate, in some ways even fragile, daughters-in-law. Though "screeching like ospreys," they are obviously not fragile in every way, and some are "heroic women," *vīrāḥ*, who have resolved to quit life, presumably by sitting down to remain still until death (the *prāya* "fast").[23]

> Drawn and haggard, the pretty faces of these superior women shine brightly, like clusters of red lotuses, Keśava. Those Kuru women over there have stopped crying and are in a state of shock—lost in thought, they go this way and that in their misery. The faces of these Kuru women here have the color of the sun—a coppery, golden hue—from their anger and their weeping. Hearing only incomplete snatches of others' lamentations, these women do not understand each other's wailings. These heroic women over here, after gasping and shrieking and wailing for a long while, shivering in their pain, are quitting this life. Many shriek and wail upon seeing the bodies, and others beat their heads with their delicate hands. The earth seems to be crammed with fallen heads, hands, and every sort of limb mixed with every other and put into heaps. And thrilling with horror upon seeing headless bodies and bodiless heads, the women, unaccustomed to these things, are

21. Another reference to their loosened, unbraided hair. See note 13 above.
22. *MBh* 11.16.55cd–59.
23. *MBh* 11.16.47.

bewildered. After joining a head to a body they stare at it blankly, and then they are pained to realize, "This is not his," but do not see another one in that place. And these over here, joining arms, thighs, feet, and other pieces cut off by arrows, are overwhelmed by the misery of it and faint over and over again. Some of the Bharata women see other decapitated bodies which the birds and beasts have eaten and which they fail to recognize as their husbands. Some beat their heads with their hands, O Slayer of Madhu, when they lay eyes upon their brothers, fathers, sons, and husbands killed by the enemy, swords still in their hands, earrings still on their ears.[24]

These "superior women" with normally pretty faces are now sunburned and haggard. Some are numbed with pain, and others are uncontrollably shaking in shock as they wait for death. With disturbing genius the author of this speech seems to take a certain grisly pleasure in detailing the gap between the recollection these women had of their men and their attempts to reassemble them from the mess of severed body-parts. And in the midst of all of this, Gāndhārī notes another disparity that is especially poignant for all audiences of epic narratives:

> Clever bards would celebrate [these men] in the wee hours of every night with the very best songs of praise and flattery. Now the best of women, tormented with pain—women in an agony of grief and pain—mourn them wretchedly, O tiger of the Vṛṣṇis.[25]

Soon after giving these general descriptions of the scene of the Bharata women on the battlefield, Gāndhārī spotted Duryodhana and fainted. When revived, this complex, ambivalent mother brooded upon her son's doomed life, regretted the influence of her brother Śakuni upon her son, and grieved for Duryodhana's father (Dhṛtarāṣṭra), for Duryodhana's wife (who is barely ever mentioned and never named in the epic), and his son Lakṣmaṇa. She then focused specifically on some of her other sons and daughters-in-law for a while, reflecting upon Duḥśāsana and his crimes against Draupadī, then upon Vikarṇa, Durmukha, and a couple of others. Gāndhārī then moved on to describe the horrors and the grief of the women associated with all the most eminent heroes.

Rakṣaṇa

The picture of women presented in *The Book of the Women* closely complements Manu's basic statement of men's Meritoriously Lawful Duty toward women, which is *rakṣaṇa*, "keeping and preserving, protecting,

24. *MBh* 11.16.43–55ab.
25. *MBh* 11.16.41–42.

defending, guarding," a view that is occasionally expressed directly in the *Mahābhārata* as well.[26] The fundamental issues of male life converge in the theme of *rakṣaṇa*—sexual desire, anxiety, and self-control; competition with other men for sexual possession and prestige, and the acts of violence that follow therefrom: Self, Other Female, Other Male, Desire, Fear, Violence, and Death. At Chapter 9, verse 3 of his *Authoritative Teaching of the Laws*, Manu says, "When she is a girl, her father guards her; when she is a young woman, her husband guards her; when she is an old woman, her sons guard her. A woman should never be on her own."[27] Where has there been articulated a more simple and more thorough summation of male duty, male prerogative, and male control in relation to females?

The *Mahābhārata* often illustrates this theme of Manu's. The sense that Yudhiṣṭhira proved an inadequate protector of his wife in the dicing match associated with his Rite of Royal Consecration hangs over the epic from the end of Book 2 onward. The powerfully moving story of Ambā[28] provides a profoundly negative example in many ways, while also giving voice to some of the suffering visited upon women by this simple, one-sided ideal of male protection. But while the *Mahābhārata* provides such *arthavādas* (statements, sermons, stories, etc.—rhetorical speech that supports compliance with the injunctions of dharma; a term from the early Mīmāṃsā analysis of sacred texts in terms of their ethical content), it also illustrates that such rules often wear thin even in fiction.[29] The issue of "protection" is often salient in male-female interactions in the epic, but the protection often fails—the virgin Kuntī was impregnated by the Sun God; Draupadī was molested by the Kauravas, and later she repeatedly criticized Yudhiṣṭhira for inadequacy of various kinds;[30] and Ambā was abused because she was inadequately protected. From these lapses arise profound dilemmas of responsibility (Yudhiṣṭhira's dogged commitment to dharma opened the door to Draupadī's being molested); identity (Ambā's bitter wish to be a man and the curious way this wish was fulfilled and made to bear fruit is central to her story); reversal (Gāndhārī's vow to adopt blindness to

26. See, for example, *MBh* 5.37.3 and 17, 38.10–11. That *rakṣaṇa* was also a matter of "keeping" or "preserving" women by restraining them from their sometimes alleged inherent sexual insatiability is made clear in the misogynistic exchange between the seer Nārada and the celestial nymph Pañcacūḍā in *MBh* 13.38.

27. *pitā rakṣati kaumāre bhartā rakṣati yauvane / rakṣanti sthavire putrā na strī svātantryam arhati //* (Manu 9.3).

28. See *MBh* 5.170–97, van Buitenen, 3: 493–532.

29. Though ancient Indian tradition and many people today regard the *Mahābhārata* as a form of history, *itihāsa*, I approach it, like those later Indian intellectuals such as the Mīmāṃsaka Kumārila Bhaṭṭa, as intended to teach important lessons regarding living "the good life" (i.e., lessons on dharma). That is, most of it is an imaginative construction that is *arthavāda*, which Kumārila said is often not true and may serve the ultimate rhetorical function of the whole simply by pleasing its audience. See the beginning of my introduction to *The Book of Peace* in this volume, and see my "India's Fifth Veda," 167 ff.

30. Including sexual deficiency; see Chapter 12.14 where she suggests he is a kṣatriya who lacks a *daṇḍa*, the "rod of rule." On the word *daṇḍa*, see the annotation to 12.15.9.

avoid being actually superior to her blind husband—whose blindness was caused ultimately by the profound collapse of male vigor and intergenerational continuity in the offspring of Śaṃtanu Bharata[31]—protects both her husband's dignity and the sexual hierarchy of marriage; this point is made indirectly in the text by the acknowledgment in Book 11 that her wifely submissiveness had caused her much suffering, had been an act of true asceticism); and other issues that demonstrate that in the *Mahābhārata*, as in many profound works of literature, artistic insight into the problems of knowing and living "the good life" far outstrips the didactic reduction of those matters.

One of the fundamental bases of the pathos depicted in Book 11 is that the Bharata women have been deprived of their "protectors" *(nātha-s)*. The text repeatedly depicts and emphasizes the need and sense of loss of the Bharata women. One of the principal ways the text does this is by dwelling upon the contrast between the delicacy and joy familiar to these women—who were accustomed to the wealth, comfort, and safety provided by the efforts of their husbands, fathers, brothers, and sons—and the terrifying grotesquerie they must confront to see how their men died. Vyāsa makes them face the bizarre task of finding and recognizing, or reconstructing, their men, and fighting repulsive animals for their fleshly remains. These were wealthy and pampered women used to the comforts of a large, well-built, rich city. Formerly well guarded by their men, now they are *anātha*, "without protectors," "helpless," and great is both their sorrow and their need for protection (which they must now find under the new king).[32] In dwelling upon the horrors of the place where the men died and the manner of their death, the text glorifies these men. In luxuriating in the description of the warriors' female wards seeing this grotesque scene, where their men died enacting, at least in principle, the protection of their women, where their men sacrificed life itself in a Meritorious, Lawful struggle (that is, a *yuddha*, [war] that conformed to enjoined Duty, dharma, and produced Merit, dharma, for all who so conformed their behavior, hard as it was) to protect the Earth and all the life Earth makes possible, the text justifies the entire system of family and society grounded in this theme of *rakṣaṇa*.

The devastation of those who depended on their protectors at the loss of those men, at their immolation of themselves on the battlefield, must have been psychologically gratifying, as well as profoundly disturbing and sad,

31. Śaṃtanu's first seven sons are killed by their mother, the river Gaṅgā, in their infancy; his eighth (Bhīṣma) swears celibacy before producing a son, and his ninth and tenth (Citrāṅgada and Vicitravīrya, his sons by Satyavatī, a woman of the river Yamunā) both die before engendering offspring: see Chapters 1.91–101, especially 92 and 94–96; van Buitenen, 1: 216–38.

32. See, for examples, *MBh* 12.78.18 and 79.38. On the semantics of the word *nātha*, see the second annotation to *MBh* 11.9.10.

to the protectors when delivered to them in poetry (among many examples furnished in Greek literature, recall Priam's journey to redeem Hector's body from Achilles),[33] because it ratified their offering of their lives and gave satisfying meaning to that sacrifice and to the life focused upon such sacrifice.[34] All of these issues of desire, fear, and meaning are represented in *The Book of the Women*, and an almost perfect emblem for the whole book is the short lament of the young bride Uttarā for the stunning young hero Abhimanyu, whose death scene in *The Book of Droṇa*, Book 7, is one of the most thrilling and painful episodes in the epic.[35] Answering the pathos of the boy's death, Uttarā's lament is perhaps the most poignant passage of the entire *Mahābhārata*.

Uttarā's Lament for Abhimanyu

After viewing the bodies of her own sons and lamenting them, Gāndhārī turned to Abhimanyu and related Uttarā's grief to Kṛṣṇa, who was Abhimanyu's uncle.[36]

> That one, Mādhava, whom they say had half again more strength and courage than his father or you; who was as proud and haughty as a lion; who by himself penetrated my son's virtually impenetrable army—that one who was death for others has now himself gone under the sway of death.[37]

But Gāndhārī's focus is the young woman in the prime of life, newly married and pregnant, who cradles the body of her young husband.

> Virāṭa's daughter has gotten right next to her husband, Kṛṣṇa, and she caresses him with her hand. Having kissed Saubhadra's face, which looks like a lotus in full bloom atop his neck of three folds, that glorious and spirited woman of such alluring bodily beauty, always so demure before, now embraces him as if she were drunk with Mādhvīka liquor. Kṛṣṇa, she has undone his gilded armor, and now she is looking over his body that is smeared with blood from his wounds.[38]
>
> The girl is speaking to you, Kṛṣṇa, as she gazes upon his body. "O Lotus-eyes! This one who had eyes like yours has been killed. O you who are blameless, he was like you in strength and heroism and brilliance

33. See Elshtain, *Women and War*, 50–52.

34. A not unusual description of warriors going into battle in the *MBh* is *tyaktajīvita*, "(men) who have (already) given up their lives."

35. See the entry for Abhimanyu in the LCP.

36. Kṛṣṇa's sister Subhadrā was Arjuna's second wife and Abhimanyu's mother. Uttarā sometimes addresses Abhimanyu with the matronymic Saubhadra. (Matronymic names are common in the *MBh*.)

37. *MBh* 11.20.1–2. 38. *MBh* 11.20.5–8.

and beauty. But now, knocked down to the ground, he sleeps too soundly."[39]

She turns back to Abhimanyu, asking about his comfort, pretending he is asleep.

> "O you who are so exquisitely delicate, who used to lie upon Raṅku deer skins, is your body not sore down there on the ground? You lie there having flung wide your two arms adorned with golden armlets—their skin is hard with welts from the bow-string, and they are so long they have the reach of elephants' trunks. You must be sleeping very soundly, as if worn out from a lot of hard work, for you say nothing to me as I prattle on in agony.
>
> "Noble one, where are you going to go now that you've left your mother, noble Subhadrā, and your fathers, who are likenesses of the Thirty Gods, and me, who am tormented with pain?"[40]
>
> Cradling his head in her lap as if he were still alive, pushing aside his blood-matted hair with her hand, she asks, "How could those great warriors kill you when you stood in the middle of the battle? . . . Did any of those warrior bulls have any heart when, to my misery, they closed around you and strove to kill you, one boy alone?"[41]

Rehearsing more details of his dying, she speaks of him in the terms of children and women—he was not *anātha,* "unguarded," "without a protector," but his protectors, his Pāṇḍava uncles, did not help him, and she raises the same women's "nest-issues" with which the Kaurava women had hounded Yudhiṣṭhira earlier in the day.

> "How, hero, could you meet death as if you were unprotected when you did have protectors? The Pāṇḍavas and the Pāñcālas were watching! How does that hero, Pāṇḍu's son [Arjuna, Abhimanyu's father and Uttarā's father-in-law], that tiger of a man, still live after seeing you killed by many in battle as if there were none to protect you? Neither the vast acquisition of the kingdom nor the defeat of their enemies will give the sons of Pṛthā any joy without you, lotus-eyes."[42]

Arjuna may bear to live without Abhimanyu, but Uttarā will not:

> "I am going to follow you right now to the heavenly worlds you won by your weapons, your Merit [dharma], and your self-control. Watch over me there.
>
> "But no one can die before the time has come. It is my wretched fate that I still live after seeing you dead in battle."[43]

39. *MBh* 11.20.9–10. 40. *MBh* 11.20.11–14.
41. *MBh* 11.20.15–16ab, 17cd. 42. *MBh* 11.20.18–20.
43. *MBh* 11.20.21–22.

Finally accepting his death and their separation, she torments herself with a vision of his sexual conquests in heaven, and pleads that he not forget her entirely:

> "O tiger of a man, now that you've gone to the world of the ancestors, what new woman will you greet with a tender, laughing voice as if she were me? Obviously you will churn the hearts of the Apsarases in heaven with your terrific good looks and your laughing voice. After you arrive in the heavenly worlds you've fashioned with your good works and met with the Apsarases, please remember the good things I did, Saubhadra, while enjoying yourself as time goes by. You were ordained to have only six months of life with me. In the seventh you went to your end, hero."[44]

"As she speaks these useless fantasies, the Matsya king's [Virāṭa, Uttarā's father] wives pull the miserable Uttarā away from [Abhimanyu],"[45] and Gāndhārī then focuses her attention upon their plight.

If we step back from this touching scene, which is as arresting as an aria all on its own, and return to the question of what Vyāsa was doing with such poetry, we may note the inversion here of the theme of *rakṣaṇa:* Though Abhimanyu died more valiantly than most of the grown warriors in contributing to the *avatāra* of the Earth's burden, Vyāsa has Uttarā emphasize the irony of the boy's isolation, his being cut off from his own protectors, who could only watch his drawn-out slaughter. Because of this ironic inversion, the brilliance and glory of Abhimanyu[46] surpasses even that of his brilliant father Arjuna.[47] The call of his name in this women's roll of honor that Vyāsa has given us is the most pure and urgent of them all, and it must have been the one most gratifying to warriors who heard its poetry. A beautiful young woman carrying Abhimanyu's child is devastated by the terrible wrongness of his death. She caresses his body with sexual hunger, wishes to die herself to be with him, and then describes his delightful prospects in heaven. Her final plea to be remembered seems almost a patronizing concession on the part of the author and this imagined audience.

The Book of the Women is thus a moving depiction of real grief which simultaneously serves society's need for warriors. It assuages the epic warrior's anxieties with a sense of purpose and feeds his ego with fantasies of glory, admiration, and paradisial pleasures.[48] It presupposes and

44. *MBh* 11.20.23–26. 45. *MBh* 11.20.27.
46. In the epic's catalog of divine filiations, Abhimanyu was the brilliant son of the Moon (*yaḥ suvarcā iti khyātaḥ somaputraḥ pratāpavān / abhimanyur bṛhatkīrtir arjunasya suto 'bhavat //* [*MBh* 1.61.86]).
47. Recall Gāndhārī's first mention of him at 11.20.1–2: "That one, Mādhava, whom they say had half again more strength and courage than his father or you."
48. See *MBh* 12.99.45: "Thousands of the best Apsarases rush up to the heroic warrior slain in battle, saying, 'Let him be my husband.'" And see 12.100.4–5, where King Janaka

reinforces a strong dichotomy between male and female elements of the world, has a minimal representation of polity, and assimilates women to the cosmic structures of Earth and Śrī.

There is far more to consider on the subject of women and war, and horrific recent events that are vividly familiar to us all make some of these issues of war and society all too relevant. As Jean Elshtain's work emphasizes, these are not matters primarily of literature and art. But it is literature we are concerned with here—literary representations of fundamental concerns in the lives of men and women and of the substance of the domestic as well as the general polity. Some of the most powerful literary explorations of these matters have been in drama, and one of the most clearly revealing approaches has been the inversion of parody.[49]

Reflecting upon these themes and seeing them as contingent constructions that are gratifying for some of the men of society at the expense of women complicates our appropriation of this book and makes us genuinely ambivalent, as was Gāndhārī toward her son Duryodhana. But such reflection can neither dispel nor much diminish the raw power of this book's descriptions. The scene is too overwhelming, the descriptions too fresh and vital, the devastation and loss too accessible even to us today for this poetry not to force its way to our hearts through our intellectual analyses and ethical disdain. We all know that the self-serving constructs

inspired his troops for battle, saying, "Look at these brilliantly shining celestial worlds for those who do not fear! They overflow with Gandharva girls! They furnish everything you wish for! They never waste away. On the other side are these hells for those that run away. They will fall into them immediately and endure everlasting ignominy as well."

49. It would be too jarring and rude to quote parody in the main text here, but this last point—the construction of images of lament for the consumption of prospective warriors—is behind the hilarious parody of women sending soldiers off to battle in W. S. Gilbert's libretto of his and Arthur Sullivan's *Pirates of Penzance*, that wicked parody of all epic sentiments. Early in the second act, Frederic, "the slave of duty," is preparing to lead the policemen of Penzance against the pirate band. The policemen express some trepidation ("When the foeman bares his steel, / We uncomfortable feel") to which the beautiful young Mabel responds: "Go, ye heroes, go to glory. / Though you die in combat gory, / Ye shall live in song and story. / Go to immortality! / Go to death, and go to slaughter; / Die, and every Cornish daughter / With her tears your grave shall water. / Go, ye heroes, go and die!" (AT WHICH ALL CHIME IN:) "Go, ye heroes, go and die!" (TO WHICH THE POLICEMEN RESPOND:) "Though to us it's evident / These intentions are well meant, / Such expressions don't appear / Calculated men to cheer / Who are going to meet their fate / In a highly nervous state. / Still to us it's evident / These intentions are well meant." (TO WHICH EDITH SAYS:) "Go and do your best endeavour / And before all links we sever / We will say farewell for ever. / Go to glory and the grave!" These lines are bandied back forth several times, and the fun continues for some time. Old Major-General Stanley, surrounded by his many daughters, vaguely suggests, first, the old Indian stories of the Progenitor Dakṣa, who had many daughters (ten, thirteen, fifty, and even sixty in one account and another), who became the original mothers of many different orders of the creation (see *MBh* 1.59.11 ff., van Buitenen, 1: 146–47), and second, even more vaguely, Dhṛtarāṣṭra traipsing out to Kurukṣetra amidst his hundred daughters-in-law. *The Book of the Women* is a well-turned piece of ancient poetry *(kāvya)* expressing directly (though certainly not unself-consciously) the convictions and sentiments Gilbert and Sullivan were parodying.

behind these passages were all too often dissolved in real blood, death, warfare, and tears, and this knowledge amplifies the power of this book, even if we stop and think of how these constructs function to encourage and perpetuate such violence.

Gāndhārī's Vision and Her Curses

Like her daughters-in-law and the other women generally portrayed in *The Book of the Women*, Gāndhārī is Vyāsa's poetic construction. But unlike Draupadī, unlike the Earth, she is not an object of contention between men. She is the type of a completely devoted and faithful wife, like Sītā in the *Rāmāyaṇa* (whose one role incorporates both being an object of contention and being an ideal type of a faithful wife). And her fidelity entails, as also with Sītā, great suffering voluntarily endured for some supernormal good *(tapas)*, which brings an accumulation of power. The power that has built up in Gāndhārī through the whole time of her stay as a wife among the Bharatas is one of the themes of *The Book of the Women*. When the Pāṇḍavas approached her and Dhṛtarāṣṭra for reconciliation as she and he were on their way to Kurukṣetra, they feared she might curse them, and they were right. She wished to curse Yudhiṣṭhira, the King of Dharma, that Lord of Death,[50] but Vyāsa divined her "evil intention" and came and talked her out of it,[51] though Yudhiṣṭhira, full of shame and grief, later asked for her curse![52] But there was still so much energy pent up in Gāndhārī that when Yudhiṣṭhira bowed down in filial piety and put his fingers on her feet, some of the rays of her eyes—still alive and powerful—slipped out under the fillet covering them as her eyes naturally glanced down toward her feet. When these rays hit the king's fingertips, they disfigured his nails permanently. "When Arjuna saw that, he stepped behind Vāsudeva. But Gāndhārī's anger was gone, and like a mother she consoled the Pāṇḍavas, who were fidgeting and shifting this way and that."[53]

Gāndhārī will now look upon the Pāṇḍavas as her own. Having settled that, they greeted their actual mother, Kuntī. As Kuntī was welcoming her sons, whom she had not seen for thirteen and one-half years, she noticed her daughter-in-law (whom she had also not seen in that time) lying on the ground, weeping. When greeted, Draupadī asked her mother-in-law pathetically, "Noble lady, where have all your grandsons gone? . . . They do not come to see you, a poor old woman they have not seen for so long. Of what use is the kingdom to me, now that I am deprived of my sons?"[54]

50. See the discussion of this epithet and Yudhiṣṭhira's approximation to Yama in the introduction to Book 12.

51. *MBh* 11.13.1–11. 52. *MBh* 11.15.3.

53. *MBh* 11.15.7cd–8. 54. *MBh* 11.15.13.

Then the two women who had lost most in the war—Gāndhārī and Draupadī—greeted each other, with Kuntī mediating. "To Gāndhārī who was suffering acutely went she who was suffering even more (Draupadī)."[55] The older woman counseled the younger against grieving by saying it had all been inevitable, "the turning of Time." But her mood then changed, and she closed with, "It's the same for me as it is for you. Who's going to comfort me? It was my wrong that brought this eminent family to extinction."[56]

The text moves immediately to the remarkable vision of this woman who had been blindfolded all the days of her marriage:

> As Gāndhārī stood there after saying this about the destruction of the Kurus, she saw everything with a divine eye. That illustrious lady, ever devoted to her husband, had performed the vow of being the same as he was and had, thus, been constantly engaged in terrific ascetic austerity, and her words were always true. Endowed with the power of divine awareness as a favor granted by the great seer of holy deeds Kṛṣṇa [Vyāsa], Gāndhārī lamented many different kinds of fallen warriors. Though she was far away, that lady of deep understanding saw, as if she were right there, the awesome, horrifying field where those heroes among men had battled.[57]

The second sentence quoted above—the one that affirms her constant devotion to her husband, that identifies what she did as a "vow," an act of terrific asceticism *(ugra tapas)*—seems intended to account for the "divine eye" *(divya cakṣus)* mentioned in the first. It also seems intended to explain or justify the fact that what the normally unseeing woman would now report would be true. This appears to describe the not unusual phenomenon of people, often women, going into mantic trances while possessed by a God or spirit, or under the influence of some extraordinary power. The whole party will soon go all the way to Kurukṣetra, and most of Gāndhārī's vision will be reported from that location. The episode recorded here seems concerned to demonstrate to us that she had a clairvoyant power, and, as I suggested, it seems to explain that the power is based in Gāndhārī's own meritorious behavior. But the next sentence tells us that Vyāsa had granted her the divine eye as a favor. It is true that, as often with the Pāṇḍavas, Vyāsa has shown a recurrent solicitude for Gāndhārī throughout the epic story. But his boon seems superfluous here. It seems that Gāndhārī's visionary eye is sufficiently accounted for without the seer's intervention. Should we see here a hedging in of this woman's power by a nervous Vyāsa? Is there here an indication of a contest between the established authority of a male seer *(ṛṣi)* and a kind of power that the brahmin tradition is not comfortable with in non-brahmins, let alone a

55. *MBh* 11.15.15cd. 56. *MBh* 11.15.20. 57. *MBh* 11.16.1–4.

woman? There is not enough information to judge this incident by itself in these terms.

I turn next to Gāndhārī's curse of Kṛṣṇa and the Vṛṣṇis, which is followed shortly by Kuntī's divulging of her painful, tragic secret. In both cases the men most directly affected respond to these bursts of feminine pain with magisterial pronouncements intended to contain the harm these women have done or would do. These three instances together do possibly define an interesting pattern.

Having described the whole grisly scene at length and called the names of the greatest warriors on both sides, describing their final position and the grief of their women, Gāndhārī observed that fate had favored Kṛṣṇa and the Pāṇḍavas, that they managed to escape death at the hands of "bulls who could have even killed the Gods with their weapons."[58]

> My impetuous sons were dead already, Kṛṣṇa, when you returned to Upaplavya without having accomplished what you wanted. I was told then by Śaṃtanu's son [Bhīṣma] and the wise Vidura, "Have no affection for your own sons." Their view, son, cannot have been wrong; before long my sons will be ashes.[59]

Finally Gāndhārī herself collapsed! Then, "with her whole body in the grip of anger, overwhelmed with grief for her sons, her senses reeling,"[60] she turned on Kṛṣṇa. Viṣṇu was incarnate as Kṛṣṇa to relieve the burden of the Earth.[61] Gāndhārī had heard Vyāsa explain to Dhṛtarāṣṭra that her son had been fated to be the stimulus of the Pāṇḍavas' catastrophic violence, and her other sons and even her brother were all born on earth with him "for the sake of the destruction of the worlds."[62] "Your son, king," Vyāsa had said to Dhṛtarāṣṭra in Gāndhārī's hearing,

> was a piece of Kali [Discord personified] born in Gāndhārī's belly to effect the destruction of the worlds. He was unforgiving, fickle, irritable, incorrigible. His brothers sprang up through the operation of fate and they were like him. Śakuni, his mother's brother, and Karṇa, his very best friend, and the princes who joined with him sprang up on the earth for the sake of this destruction.[63]

She accused Kṛṣṇa of having ignored the impending destruction of the whole family, even though he could have done something to prevent it, implicitly protesting the premise that a reenactment of the war of the Gods and the demons on earth was required to remedy the problem of Earth's being overrun by reincarnate demons. So this woman, who had been cruelly used in the plan of the Gods to relieve Earth, summoned up the

58. *MBh* 11.25.28–30. The phrase in quotation marks is a condensed rendering of 29ef.
59. *MBh* 11.25.31–3. 60. *MBh* 11.25.35.
61. Vyāsa gives an account of this layer of events to Dhṛtarāṣṭra at 11.8.20 ff.
62. *MBh* 11.8.24–29. 63. *MBh* 11.8.27–29.

energy within herself and cursed Viṣṇu's earthly manifestation, the curse of actual women everywhere upon the wars men fight over Lady Śrī.

> And since you neglected the destruction of the Kurus, O Slayer of Madhu, because you wanted it, O man of mighty arms, now take the result of that. Since I have come to have some ascetic power because of my obedience to my husband, I will curse you with that, O bearer of discus and club, you who are so enigmatic. Since you ignored your kinsmen, the Kurus and the Pāṇḍavas, as they were killing each other, Govinda, you shall slay your own kinsmen. Even you, O Slayer of Madhu, when the thirty-sixth year is at hand, shall wander in the woods having slain your own kinsmen, having slain your own family, having slain your sons. You shall arrive at your end by an ignominious means. And your wives, their sons killed, their affines and kinsmen killed, will be running around just as these Bharata women are doing.[64]

A "horrible speech" *(vacana ghora)*, Vyāsa calls it. But when Kṛṣṇa heard it, he calmly deflected the good woman's curse with divine insouciance:

> With a bit of a smile, the high-minded Vāsudeva said to Queen Gāndhārī, "Good woman, no one but I will be the destroyer of the circle of the Vṛṣṇis. I know this to be so. Kṣatriya woman, you are doing what has already been done. The Yādavas cannot be killed by other men, nor even by the Gods or Dānavas. So they will come to their destruction at each other's hands."[65]

This exchange, which upset the Pāṇḍavas when they heard it, ended Gāndhārī's vision and her speech. Fifteen years hence Gāndhārī, leaning upon Kuntī and leading her husband, will retire into the forest to await death.[66] She will see her sons one more time before dying, a year later, when Vyāsa will visit her and Dhṛtarāṣṭra and Kuntī in the forest and show all of them whomever they wish to see.[67] The Pāṇḍavas, their court, and many citizens of Hāstinapura were present when Vyāsa entered the Gaṅgā and brought the dead back in its waters, and when, after a whole night of reunion with the living, the dead returned, many of their widows, given leave by Vyāsa, entered the water and went to the world of the dead with them.[68] Two years later Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Gāndhārī, and Kuntī died calm and composed in the midst of a forest fire, too weak because of their asceticism to flee.[69] Eighteen years after that the Vṛṣṇis did destroy themselves just as Gāndhārī had cursed them to die, just as Kṛṣṇa had said they would without her curse.[70]

64. *MBh* 11.25.38–42. 65. *MBh* 11.25.43–45. 66. *MBh* 15.15.8 ff.
67. *MBh* 15.40. 68. *MBh* 15.41.16 ff. 69. *MBh* 15.45.10–38.
70. See *MBh* 16.4; see my note to Gāndhārī's curse in an annotation at 11.25.41.

Kuntī's Revelation

Kuntī has been the quietest of all the epic's main women. Her main "scenes" in the epic all involve her premarital son Karṇa, and her connection to him was completely secret. She kept her secret through Karṇa's childhood as the adopted son of the *sūta* Adhiratha, through the time her overt sons were exiled from the kingdom, and then throughout the war. But as the final observances for the dead drew to their end, and she faced the prospect of her son dying without his proper libation, her special grief burst from her, and she told Yudhiṣṭhira to perform the water libation for his dead brother. This final burst of fiery energy occurred on the banks of one of the main "women" of the epic, the Gaṅgā, Bhīṣma's son-murdering mother.[71] Here the river, that sixteen years hence will yield the bodies of the war dead for one night of congress with the living (see above), is a healing mother:

> They reached the soothing river Gaṅgā that pious people love, with its many quiet pools and exquisite banks, with great marshes and forests alongside it. The Kuru women then took off their ornaments and their outer garments, and, wailing in great torment, they all made the oblations for the fathers, grandsons, brothers, sons, and grandfathers of their own people and for their husbands. Those who knew the applicable Laws also performed the water-rites for their allies who were not kinsmen. As the libations for the heroes were being performed by the heroes' wives, the river Gaṅgā, with its many fine passages giving access to its waters, spread out even more widely. Dotted with the wives of the heroes, the shore of the Gaṅgā beside that great expanse of water was somber and joyless, not festive at all.[72]

Then this woman who had put her baby, the son of the Sun, onto the river Aśva (which flowed into the Gaṅgā's rival, the Yamunā, which itself flowed into the Gaṅgā far downstream at Prayāga), "all of a sudden, withered with grief, crying," told her sons in a quiet voice that the mainstay of Duryodhana's army, Arjuna's particular nemesis, Karṇa, had been her first-born son.[73] Yudhiṣṭhira was pained and amazed. Kuntī's grief caused a new explosion of grief in Yudhiṣṭhira, one that crowned all those other sorrows in the king and necessitated the cooling of the king and the revisioning of kingship that will be described in *The Book of Peace.*

"How was he your lady's son, the baby of a God from some time before?" Yudhiṣṭhira asked in amazement. "Every one of us was scorched by the

71. She had killed the first seven children she bore to Śaṃtanu, demanding his acquiescence. He had intervened with the eighth, who became Bhīṣma, but only at the expense of dissolving their marriage. See *MBh* 1.92 (and its background in 1.91 and 93); van Buitenen, 1: 216–22.
72. *MBh* 11.27.1–5. 73. *MBh* 11.27.6–11.

heat of his arms! He would have been like a fire hid in your clothing! How did you conceal him? Aaah! Woman, you have slain us by keeping this secret! Now we and our connections are weighed down with the death of Karṇa, as well as by the loss of Abhimanyu, the killing of our sons with Draupadī, the loss of the Pāñcālas, and the demise of the Kurus. This pain touches me a hundred times more intensely than those! Grieving for Karṇa, I am burning as if I had been put into a fire."[74] And then he blamed Kuntī for all the horrors that had taken place: "[Joined by Karṇa,] there is nothing we could not have won! Not even what is in heaven! This grotesque butchery that has finished the Kauravas would not have happened!"[75] Yudhiṣṭhira stood in the Gaṅgā and poured the libation for Karṇa and then went into a stunned shock.

Thus *The Book of the Women* ends with a grating harshness that hangs suspended like the final chord that blares out at Mimi's death at the end of *La Bohème.* The painful dissonance at the end of Book 11 gives rise to the extended spasm of Yudhiṣṭhira's grief with which Book 12, *The Book of Peace,* begins. Still in shock a month later, after learning more of Karṇa's doom, Yudhiṣṭhira returned to the subject of Kuntī's having carried the secret of Karṇa for all of his life and cursed women everywhere to be unable to keep secrets.[76]

A Map of Book 11, The Book of the Women

My discussion above has broadly followed the progression of the text, but I have avoided complicating the discussion with references to the specifics of the formal structure of Book 11. Even though this book is short, a map of it and the names of its parts will be a useful guide to the summaries and the translation that follow. I refer to this major book's four minor books *(upaparvans)* here by their titles in the translation and by their *upaparvan*-numbers in the overall series of the purported one hundred *upaparvans* that make up the entire *Mahābhārata.*[77]

11(80) The Dispelling of Grief[78] (11.1–8)

As befits its underlying nature, *The Book of the Women* begins by focusing upon the old king Dhṛtarāṣṭra, who has spent the war in Hāstinapura, the lone kṣatriya male amidst the Bharata women. Now, with every one of his kṣatriya sons dead, the devastated Dhṛtarāṣṭra intends to end his life. In

74. *MBh* 11.27.14.–5, 17–9.
75. *MBh* 11.27.20. 76. *MBh* 12.6.9–10.
77. In the critical edition of the *MBh* from Pune there are, in fact, only ninety-five *upaparvans.*
78. The *Viśokaparvan.*

response, as so often in the epic, the *Mahābhārata* laces learned discussions into the narrative as his bard Saṃjaya, his wise but low-born half-brother Vidura (Dharma incarnate), and his physical father, the seer Vyāsa, upbraid him for his past irresponsibility and his current self-pity.

Saṃjaya points out to the blind, old king his own role in bringing the war to pass. Vidura then offers his troubled brother religious and philosophical wisdom, which Dhṛtarāṣṭra draws out by questioning Vidura further on these matters. The six chapters of Vidura's lectures are grouped together as a single, titled subtext in the translation.[79]

11(80a) Vidura's "Way of Understanding" and the "Mystery of Rebirth" (11.2–7)

Vidura initially assures the king that his dead sons are happy in heaven, and he goes on to describe the mystery of life, death, and rebirth, concluding with recommendations to seek escape from all this, that is, Absolute Freedom *(mokṣa),* and the world of Brahmā.

Vidura's long lecture is too intense for the old king, and at its conclusion, as the *upaparvan* proper resumes, Dhṛtarāṣṭra faints away. When he has been revived, the king repeats his intention to commit suicide, and his father Vyāsa lectures his son with stern compassion on the overarching powers that were the true causes behind these events. Vyāsa attributes inevitable death to fate and Time. He then recounts having heard the Gods once promise the Goddess Earth that they, the Gods, would relieve her of the obnoxious burden of the demons who lived on Earth as vicious and Unlawful kings, and they would use the wicked Duryodhana to effect this purge of the Earth. Vyāsa encourages his son to stop grieving and reconcile with the Pāṇḍavas, and the king agrees to try to do that. So *The Book of the Women* begins with the numbing grief of the blind old king Dhṛtarāṣṭra and the wisdom of the sages that is offered to counter it.[80]

11(81) The Women[81] (11.9–25)

This minor book falls into two distinct halves, the first (made up of Chapters 11.9–15) narrates the predawn procession of Dhṛtarāṣṭra and the Kaurava women from Hāstinapura to Kurukṣetra. They meet

79. No particular basis exists in the tradition for distinguishing this subsection of the *upaparvan,* but I think such distinctions, when the contents of the chapters warrant them, make the text much more manageable. It is an imposition on the text, but not one that distorts it egregiously.
80. This component of the major book makes a little more than a quarter of the whole (407 lines of verse out of 1506 altogether).
81. *Strīparvan,* that is the *Strī upaparvan* within the *Strīparvan.*

Aśvatthāman's party fleeing ahead of the Pāṇḍavas after the night raid.[82] The three desperadoes split up after this meeting, and Aśvatthāman heads for a retreat on the bank of the Gaṅgā, where the Pāṇḍavas later catch up with him.[83] The Pāṇḍavas then meet the party of Kaurava women and reconcile themselves uneasily with Dhṛtarāṣṭra (who tries to kill Bhīma but is thwarted by Kṛṣṇa Vāsudeva) and Gāndhārī, who agrees with Vyāsa to refrain from cursing the Pāṇḍavas. Bhīma admits fighting unfairly against Duryodhana (pleading necessity), but lies to Gāndhārī about drinking Duḥśāsana's blood after killing him. As Yudhiṣṭhira bends down and puts his fingers to Gāndhārī's feet in supplication, some of the fiery rays from her downward glance escapes the lower edge of her fillet and permanently burn his fingernails. Next the Pāṇḍavas meet their mother Kuntī for the first time in over thirteen years, and Kuntī leads the devastated Draupadī over to Gāndhārī, who consoles the younger woman with hard-earned and heartfelt wisdom.

11(81a) Gāndhārī's Vision of the Battlefield and Her Lament (11.16–25)

Immediately upon pronouncing this wisdom, Gāndhārī, voluntarily sightless out of wifely subordination, acquires a "divine eye" and scans the ghastly battlefield from afar. The whole party then travels the rest of the way to Kurukṣetra, where Gāndhārī delivers the long recital of the heart-wrenching scene as the Bharata women fan out over the battlefield littered with the bodies of their men and boys. Viewing the whole battlefield while standing in one place next to Kṛṣṇa Vāsudeva, she sees the remains of the many dead heroes—her sons and their enemies alike—and she artfully describes the grief of their women. The human cost of the Bhārata war is fully registered in the epic only through this mantic vision of Gāndhārī's.

11(82) The Funeral Observances (11.26)[84]

Dhṛtarāṣṭra and Yudhiṣṭhira discuss the fatalities of the war, and Dhṛtarāṣṭra worries about those dead who have no kin to look to the burning of their bodies and their final rites. Yudhiṣṭhira orders the cremation of the corpses, and after that is done the whole party goes to the Gaṅgā River.

82. Recounted in Book 10 of the *MBh.*
83. This encounter has already been related in Book 10's *Aiśīkaparvan, The Book of the Arrow, MBh* 10.10–18; see in particular 10.13.10 ff.
84. *Śrāddhaparvan.*

11(83) The Offering of Water (11.27)[85]

At the Gaṅgā the women pour libations for their dead men. Then the mother of the Pāṇḍavas, Kuntī, commands her sons to pour for Karṇa too, and she reveals that Karṇa was her firstborn son. Amazed and extremely upset, Yudhiṣṭhira pours the libation for Karṇa and performs the final rites for his older brother with that one's wives.

85. *Jalapradānikaparvan.*

Contents

11(80) The Dispelling of Grief

11.1–8 (B. 1–8; C. 1–245)
1 (1; 1). Janamejaya asks Vaiśaṃpāyana to tell him what Dhṛtarāṣṭra, and then Yudhiṣṭhira, did upon learning that Duryodhana had been killed. He also wants to hear the final events relating to Kṛpa and the other two Kaurava survivors. Vaiśaṃpāyana describes Dhṛtarāṣṭra grieving for his dead sons. Saṃjaya upbraids Dhṛtarāṣṭra for grieving and tells him to make himself useful (1–5). Dhṛtarāṣṭra laments even more intensely, regretting his string of bad judgments. He suggests he will soon make the journey to heaven (5–20). Saṃjaya chides him for not listening to sound advice and for indulging his son Duryodhana, thus bringing his grief upon himself. Saṃjaya urges him once more to relinquish his sorrow (20–35).

2–7 (B. 2–7; C. 46–186). (80a) Vidura's "Way of Understanding" and the "Mystery of Rebirth."

8 (8; 193). Dhṛtarāṣṭra faints. Vyāsa, Vidura, Saṃjaya and others try to make him comfortable. After a long time Dhṛtarāṣṭra regains consciousness and prattles with grief and self-pity, saying he will bring on death (1–5). When he falls silent Vyāsa gives him a stern lecture, reminding him that he, Dhṛtarāṣṭra, is well aware of everyone's mortality, and telling him that this slaughter was a matter of fate (10–15). Vyāsa recounts overhearing a past conversation among the Gods in

which Viṣṇu told Earth that Duryodhana would soon be the occasion for the Gods' fulfilling their promise to relieve her of her burden (20–25). Vyāsa lectures Dhṛtarāṣṭra on his sons' wickedness and on the fact that they were born on earth in the interests of destruction. He tells him the Pāṇḍavas were blameless, while his sons were vile and harmed the earth. All this is the "secret of the Gods" (25–35). He tells Dhṛtarāṣṭra to give up his grief and encourages him to reconcile with the Pāṇḍavas (35–40). Dhṛtarāṣṭra agrees to try not to grieve, and Vyāsa disappears (45).

Janamejaya said:

11.1.1 Sage, what did the great king Dhṛtarāṣṭra do when he heard that Duryodhana* had been killed and his army completely slaughtered? And what did the Kaurava prince, the high-minded son of the God Dharma, do?† And what of that trio, Kṛpa and the other two?‡ I have just heard about Aśvatthāman's deed§ and the curses they put upon each other.‖ Tell me the final events. And tell me what Saṃjaya# said.°

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

When Dhṛtarāṣṭra's hundred sons had been killed, the wise Saṃjaya approached that dejected lord of the earth, who burned with grief for his
5 sons, who was like a tree shorn of all its branches. He had fallen into a mute trance and was lost in thought. The wise Saṃjaya said to him, "Why are you grieving, great king? You help nothing when you grieve.°** Eighteen armies are dead, O lord of peoples, and this rich earth has no people. The earth is now absolutely bare! The kings of many different countries came from every direction and allied themselves to your son, and they have all met their end. See that the funeral rites for all the fathers, sons, grandsons, kinsmen, allies, and teachers are performed in due course."

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

When he heard that woeful statement the indomitable Dhṛtarāṣṭra, pained because of the killing of his sons and grandsons, fell to the earth like a tree blown over in the wind.

* = Dhṛtarāṣṭra's son; see Appendix 2, "List of Characters and Places" (LCP). All unexpanded references to appendixes in any notes to the translation signify those in the backmatter that supplement the general introduction to this volume.

† = dharma, conceived anthropomorphically; Dharma's son here is Yudhiṣṭhira.

‡ Kṛpa, Aśvatthāman, and Kṛtavarman, the perpetrators of the gruesome attack on the sleeping Pāṇḍava camp.

§ = the attack on the sleeping warriors; see the introduction, "What Happened in the War?"

‖ When the Pāṇḍavas caught up to Aśvatthāman in Vyāsa's hermitage; see the introduction, "What Happened in the War?"

\# = Dhṛtarāṣṭra's charioteer and bard.

** This small mark (°) indicates the presence of an annotation in the endnotes at the back of the book.

Dhṛtarāṣṭra said:

10 My sons have been killed! My ministers have been killed! All my allies have been killed! Obviously I am going to be miserable as long as I move upon this earth! What good is life now for me, deprived of my connections? A decrepit old bird whose wings have been clipped? My kingdom is gone, my allies are dead, and I am blind—like the sun when its rays are feeble, I am not going to shine very brightly, wise one.

I did not do what my friends° told me to do, nor what Jāmadagnya,* nor the divine seer Nārada, nor what Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana† said. The best thing to do was declared to me by Kṛṣṇa in the middle of the assembly
15 when he said, "Enough hostility! King, your son must be restrained." Using bad judgment, I did not follow this advice, and now I sorely regret it. Nor would I listen to the advice that Bhīṣma gave, which was always consistent with Law.

After hearing of the killing of Duḥśāsana, the defeat of Karṇa, and the eclipse of that sun Droṇa, my heart broke when I heard that Duryodhana had been killed bellowing like a bull.°

Saṃjaya, I do not recall doing anything wrong in the past that might have yielded as its fruit what I suffer here and now as a dazed fool. But obviously I did something wrong in earlier births, since the Creator has joined me to such wretched deeds. The waning of my powers, the destruction of all my kinsmen, the annihilation of my friends and allies have all come upon me through the operation of fate.° Is there a man in the world more miserable than I?

20 Well, now the sons of Pāṇḍu will have to see me doing vows,° as I am obviously on that long road to the heavenly world of Brahmā.°

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

As that Indra among men was lamenting so grievously and sifting through his many sorrows,° Saṃjaya made a speech to dispel his grief. "King, get rid of this grief! Most excellent king,° you have heard from the elders the settled teachings of the Vedas° and the various manuals and traditional texts, as well as what the sages told Sṛñjaya long ago when he was pained with grief for his son.° Likewise, when your son was full of the insolence of youth, you paid no heed to what your friends were saying to you. You did nothing of your proper business because you were greedy and too eager for results. Duḥśāsana was your son's° advisor, and so was the mean-spirited Rādheya,‡ and the rotten Śakuni, the stupid Citrasena,§ and
25 Śalya, that thorn‖ in the side of the whole world!° Your son, Bhārata, did not do what Bhīṣma, the elder of the Kurus,° told him to do, nor what Gāndhārī or Vidura told him to do. He never honored any obligation

* = the Bhārgava seer, Rāma, son of Jamadagni; see the LCP.

† = Vyāsa. ‡ = Karṇa.

§ = another of Dhṛtarāṣṭra's sons and Duryodhana's brothers.

‖ = *śalya*; the identity of the words is the point.

required by Law, always saying, 'War!' instead. He took all kṣatriyas to perdition and increased the glory of his enemies. And you stayed neutral and never said what needed to be said. You, the main ox, did not carry the burden in a way equal to its weight.

"A man must get a matter started properly at its very outset so he does not regret it when it is over and done.° You were overly fond of your son and wanted only to please him, so now you regret it. You should not grieve.

30 "A man who just sees the honey without looking further to see the cliff falls because of his greed for the honey, and he is sorry just as you are, sir.

"One cannot gain riches while he grieves, nor can one feel ease while grieving; one cannot gain Royal Splendor° while grieving, and one who is grieving cannot find the Ultimate.

"A man who starts a fire and covers it in his clothing and then is sorry when he is burned is not very smart. Pṛthā's* sons were a fire you and your son fanned with the wind of talk, and that fire blazed up when you sprinkled it with the clarified butter of greed. Your sons rushed like moths into that fire when it was kindled—they were burned up in the flame of Keśava† and you should not mourn them.

35 "King, your face is awash in falling tears. The learned treatises do not countenance this, and surely the wise do not approve it. It is said they burn men like sparks. Rid yourself of grief by means of insight and understanding.° Take hold of yourself!"

After the exalted Saṃjaya encouraged the king in this way, Vidura told him more that was based on insight and understanding, O you burner of your enemies.‡

11(80a) Vidura's "Way of Understanding" and the "Mystery of Rebirth"

2–7 (B. 2–7; C. 46–186)

2 (2; 46). Vidura addresses his brother Dhṛtarāṣṭra with pithy philosophical generalities that emphasize the impersonal processes operating below the surface appearances of persons and events—time, death, union, separation. He assures Dhṛtarāṣṭra that the dead warriors are happy in heaven

* = Kuntī's. † = Kṛṣṇa.
‡ Addressed to Janamejaya by Vaiśaṃpāyana.

(1–10). He describes some of the universal aspects of suffering and repeatedly says that analysis and understanding are effective remedies against mental suffering (10–20).
3 (3; 84). Dhṛtarāṣṭra says his grief is gone, but he asks to hear more in the same vein from Vidura. Vidura continues, describing the "mystery of rebirth" (1–15).
4 (4; 104). Dhṛtarāṣṭra asks how one can understand this mystery of rebirth. Vidura recounts the course of a typical life, from starting out as an embryo to becoming a slave of attachments and meeting with the Lord of Death. He recommends understanding oneself, living by Law, conforming to the basic reality, and gaining Absolute Freedom (1–15)
5 (5; 125). Dhṛtarāṣṭra asks to hear at length the whole of this "way of understanding." Vidura relates a story. A brahmin entered a dangerous wood and ferocious beasts chased him. Running for his life, he fell into a well overgrown with vines and grasses. Tangled in the vines, he hung upside down in the shaft of the well, terrified by several imminent dangers. Clinging to life, he survived by greedily licking a trickle of honey dripping down the side of the well (1–20).
6 (6; 149). Dhṛtarāṣṭra is moved by the brahmin's plight and asks how he might rescue him. Vidura explains the elements of the story as an allegory for the round of rebirth from which the wise escape (1–10).
7 (7; 163). Dhṛtarāṣṭra asks Vidura to say more. Vidura offers more allegorical interpretations of elements of the story, elaborating particularly upon rebirth and praising those who seek to escape from it (1–10). He develops a simile comparing people to warriors riding in chariots and advocates firm control of the body and senses with thought (10–15). He closes by recommending control of oneself to gain the world of Brahmā (15).

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

2.1 With words of nectar Vidura cheered that bull among men, the son of Vicitravīrya.* Listen to what he said.

Vidura said:

Stand up, king! Why do you lie there? Take hold of yourself!

* = Dhṛtarāṣṭra; his nominal father was Vicitravīrya Bharata (Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vyāsa was his physical father), and Ambikā, princess of the Kāśis, was his mother. Vidura (an incarnation of the God Dharma) was also the physical son of Vyāsa and thus Dhṛtarāṣṭra's half-brother; see the LCP.

This is the final disposition° of all mortal beings mobile and stationary alike. All accumulations end in dissolution, all risings end in decline, all unions end in separation, and life ends in death.

Since Yama* drags away the brave and the cowardly alike, why should 5 these kṣatriyas not fight, O Bhārata, you bull among kṣatriyas? One man does not fight but dies anyway; another fights, and he still lives. Great king, no one who has reached his Time can go beyond it.

You ought not mourn those killed in battle, king. If the learned treatises are a reliable authority, then those men have traveled the course that goes the farthest.° All of them had performed their recitations of the Vedas, and all had performed special vows, and all those kṣatriyas died facing forward in battle—what is there to lament in that? They came from beyond your sight,° and they have gone beyond your sight again. They were not yours, and you were not theirs—what is there to lament in that?

He who is killed gains heaven, while he who kills gains glory—for us, 10 these are both superbly excellent.° War is never fruitless. Indra will appoint them to celestial worlds that will fulfill all their wishes. O bull among men, they will be the guests of Indra. Mortals cannot go to heaven the way heroes killed in war go there—not through sacrificial rites rich with presents for the priests, not through ascetic observances, nor through special magical knowledge.°

> Men experience thousands of mothers and fathers and hundreds of wives and children in their rebirths—to whom do they belong? To whom do we belong?
>
> Day after day thousands of occasions for grief and hundreds of occasions for fear come upon the fool, but not upon the wise man.
>
> O best of the Kurus, Time has no favorite and no enemy and is neutral toward none—Time drags everyone off.
>
> 15 Life is temporary, and so are beauty, youth, masses of goods, health, and living with those we like—the wise man is not overly fond of these things.
>
> An individual should not grieve over the misery that is common to all people.° And if something has ceased to exist, it will never come back.
>
> If one sees a remedy, he might fix the ill, if he is not grieving.
>
> This is the medicine for misery—that one not brood upon it. Misery does not leave the man who dwells upon it, in fact it simply waxes stronger.

* = the Lord of Death.

> Because of union with what is disliked and separation from what is liked people of little understanding are joined with mental miseries.
>
> There are no Riches, there is no Merit,* there is no Pleasure in your grieving over this. No, it† does not then leave him, who still has business to complete,° and he is deprived of the three kinds of benefit.°‡
>
> 20 Men who are not satisfied even when they come to one superbly wealthy position and then another are grievously deluded—men who are wise become completely contented.[/20]
>
> One should slay mental misery with wisdom and bodily misery with medicines—this is what knowledge is for! One should not sink to the level of fools.
>
> Deeds one did in the past lie down beside a man as he lies down, stand next to him when he stands, run after him when he runs. In whatever stage of life° one does something good or bad, then in that same stage of life he enjoys the fruit of that deed.

Dhṛtarāṣṭra said:

3.1 Wise one, my grief is gone because of your good sayings, but I want to hear more of your words. Really, I do.° How do the wise escape the mental miseries that come from being in contact with what they dislike and being deprived of what they like?

Vidura said:

However it is the mind escapes pain or pleasure, that is the way the sage becomes tranquil and finds happiness.

All that we are aware of is impermanent, O bull among men. The world resembles a banana tree: no one ever finds any permanent value in it.°

5 The wise say the bodies of mortals are just houses that come undone in time—but the being§ in them is one and beautiful.

The bodies of embodied souls are just like the clothes a man discards, whether they are worn out or not, when he likes some other piece of clothing.

O son of Vicitravīrya, beings arrive at their particular life here, whether it is miserable or happy, through the deeds they themselves have done. Heaven is reached through one's deeds, and so are happiness and misery, Bhārata. So, whether he wishes to or not, a man carries his own load.

* = dharma, a Lawful deed (or deeds) done, which stays with the doer and makes his or her future good.
† = the misery that occasions the person's grief.
‡ = Profit, Merit, and Pleasure; artha, dharma, and kāma.
§ = *sattva:* (1) The being, the person or creature, who dwells in a house, and (2) the soul that dwells in the body.

Just as a clay pot may break apart as soon as it has been put on the wheel, or after it has been worked a little, or after it is finished; or as it may be broken as it is being taken off the wheel, or after it has been removed and is still wet, or after it is dry, or after it has been fired and is being taken out of the kiln, or after it has already been removed, or while it is being used, so too, Bhārata, the bodies of souls. The body may be destroyed when one is still a fetus, or has just been born, or is just a day old, a half month old, a full month old, a year old, two years old, or has become a young man, a middle-aged man, or an old man.

Beings are born and they die as a result of their prior deeds. Since the world is constituted in this way, what is the point of your regrets?

15 O lord of men, just as a being moves along in the water, playfully leaping out and diving back in, so people of little understanding, bound to consume the results of their deeds, are afflicted with leaping out of the unfathomable mystery of rebirth° and diving back into it. But those who are wise, who are devoted to what is real, who search for the end of rebirth, who understand the way beings come together°—they travel the course that goes the farthest.

Dhṛtarāṣṭra said:

4.1 O you best of speakers, how should the unfathomable mystery of rebirth be understood? This is what I want to hear. Explain the basic truth of it for me who asks you for it.

Vidura said:

Hear about all the activities of beings from birth onward, lord. Here in this world one dwells first for some interval as a *kalala* embryo.° Then, when the fifth month has passed, he forms flesh. Then in a month the fetus is produced complete with all its limbs. As he dwells there amidst filth, smeared with blood and flesh, his feet are above and his head is below because of the force of wind.* Accompanied by his previous deeds, he encounters many afflictions from the compression of the womb when he approaches its entrance. When he escapes from this passage into rebirth,° he faces other calamities. Grabber demons° stalk him, like dogs going after a piece of meat. Then at a later time, if he is still living, diseases sneak up on him as he is bound by his own deeds. Then, lord of men, various vices develop as he is bound by the cords of his senses and sickened by the sweetness of his addictions. As he becomes tied by these more and more, he is never satisfied. He does not realize he has already arrived in the realm of Yama. The minions of Yama drag him about, and in time he dies. Since even so little° as the sounds made in the mouth of a mute are assent or rejection, he fails to realize that he himself binds himself further.

Aaah! People are led astray! They are controlled by greed! A man

* = the term that designates the mechanical forces within bodies; here it refers to wind circulating in the mother's body.

deranged by greed, anger, and pride never looks closely at himself. Enjoying his birth in a good family while despising those born in low families, proud of being rich while despising the poor, he calls others fools but does not examine himself. He flings instruction at others, but does not want to teach himself.

Whoever lives in this inconstant world of living beings, keeping all the Laws° from his birth on, should reach the course that goes the farthest. He who understands everything in this way and moves in accordance with the basic reality gains the path to Absolute Freedom, O lord of men.

Dhṛtarāṣṭra said:

5.1 Recount for me at length the whole path of understanding so I can traverse with understanding the unfathomable mystery of Law.

Vidura said:

On this I will tell you, after bowing to the Self-Existent One, how the supreme seers describe the unfathomable mystery of rebirth. We hear tell of a brahmin going along in the vast round of rebirth who came to an impenetrable wood that scared him to death° because it teemed with huge, carnivorous beasts. Horrible, voracious beasts were scattered around it on every side, such as lions, tigers, and elephants. When he saw this, his heart pounded wildly;° his hair bristled and stood straight up. Running through that wood, dashing this way and that, looking out in every direction, wondering, "Where can I take refuge?" searching for some opening among those beasts, racing forward in terror, he could not get out, and he could not get far enough from the beasts. In time he saw that the horrible wood was surrounded by a net on every side, and that an absolutely horrible woman had embraced the wood with her arms. The large wood was dotted here and there with five-headed snakes, lofty like mountains and touching the sky like tall trees.

10 In the midst of that wood there was a covered-up well; its opening was choked with vines that were hidden under a covering of grass. The brahmin fell into that hidden well and got caught in the webbing of the vine's filaments.° He hung there with his feet up and his head down, like a big jack-fruit° hanging by the stalk. And then another calamity developed to make things worse. He saw a large, black-brindled elephant at the edge of the top of the well. It had six faces and moved on twelve feet and it was gradually working its way over to the well, which was obscured by vines and trees. As he clung to the branch of a tree, at its ends there were all sorts of frightening, horrible-looking bees; they had gathered honey and were returning to their hive. Over and over again they went out to get honey. Honey is the sweetest of all things, O bull of the Bharatas, but it does not satisfy a fool! A stream of this honey was flowing there constantly and copiously, and that man hanging there drank from that stream the whole while. But in this dire situation, as he drank it, his craving for it did not abate. Never satisfied, he kept wanting it again and again. And the

man never lost hope for his life, king, though white and black rats were gnawing through the tree on which his hope of surviving depended!

20 He was afraid of the wild animals on the periphery of the impenetrable wood, of the extremely ferocious woman, of the snake below him in the well, of the elephant at the rim of the well, and, fifth, he was afraid that the tree might fall because of the rats. They say there is a sixth great hazard, from the bees, because of his greedy desire for the honey. Having been tossed into the ocean of rebirth, he lives there that way and does not give up his hope of staying alive.

Dhṛtarāṣṭra said:

6.1 Aaah! That sure is tremendous misery! He lives a miserable existence! What pleasure can he have there? How could he ever be satisfied there, O best of speakers? Where is that place where he lives in such a dangerous narrowing of his Lawful Works and Merit?°* How can that man escape from that great danger? Tell me everything, and I will get busy and do what is needed.° Great compassion moves me to try to rescue him.

Vidura said:

King, this is an allegory, cited by those who are experts on Absolute 5 Freedom. With it a man can find the right way in the worlds beyond. The forest that was mentioned is the vast round of rebirth° and the impenetrable wood is the mystery of rebirth. And the wild beasts mentioned are accounted as diseases. And that gigantic woman who stands over the place—the wise say she is the decay of old age that destroys one's color and beauty. And that well, prince, is the embodied soul's body, and that great snake living at the bottom of it is Time, the ender of all beings, that takes everything away from embodied souls. And that vine that grew across the middle of the well, on a tendril of which the man hung, that is the desire to stay alive that embodied souls have. And that six-headed elephant moving round the tree at the rim of the well is interpreted as the year. Its faces are accounted as the seasons, its twelve feet as the months. 10 And the men who reflect upon things say those rats always busy cutting down the tree are the days and nights. And those bees there are accounted as one's desires. And those numerous trickles that run into the stream of honey, one should understand them to be the sweet juices of pleasures in which men drown. The wise ones who understand the turning round of the wheel of rebirth cut the ropes tying them to the wheel of rebirth.

Dhṛtarāṣṭra said:

7.1 Aaah! You, my good man, who see the fundamental truth of things, have really told me a story! It would be a joy to hear more of the nectar of your words.

* = dharma; here, his ability to fulfill the laws pertinent to him and so accumulate "merit."

Vidura said:

Listen again, Bhārata, and I will tell you the fuller version of this path. When those who are adept have heard this, they escape from rebirths.

Just as a man on a long journey will stop somewhere out of exhaustion, or even take up residence somewhere, so stupid men make their residence in many different wombs in a succession of rebirths, while sages make their 5 escape from that. So those men who know the learned teachings say this* is the journey, and experts say the mystery of rebirth is the wood. And this† is the returning to the world that mortal beings undergo, whether they be mobile or stationary, O bull of the Bharatas—a wise man has no fondness for it. The wise declare the bodily and mental diseases of mortals, both the obvious ones and the hidden ones, to be the wild beasts. (Those with little understanding are not troubled by the great wild beasts of their own past deeds,° not even while they are constantly harried and assaulted by them, Bhārata.) And then, should a man escape from these diseases, 10 king, beauty-destroying old age later covers him up as he is mired in a great bog where there is no foothold amidst a host of different sounds, forms, tastes, touches, and smells on every side.

The years, seasons, months, fortnights, and days and nights and twilights one after the other destroy one's beauty and one's vitality. These are the measures of time,° and men who are stupid do not understand them.

They say all beings here are inscribed with their deeds.

They say the body of beings is a chariot, and the soul° is the charioteer. The horses are the senses; deeds and thoughts are the reins. He who races along behind these running horses spins around in circles on the wheel of 15 rebirth. But he who governs them with his thoughts is "the governor," and he does not return.‡ They say this chariot§ that bewilders the stupid belongs to Yama.‖ It gets what you have gotten, king: The destruction of its kingdom, the destruction of its allies, the destruction of its sons.

These pangs of regret° are miserable, Bhārata. For the most extreme miseries, a virtuous man should use "misery-medicine."

Not courage, not riches, nor friends, nor allies can free one from misery the way a mind that is firmly restrained can.

Therefore, Bhārata, the brahmin who relies upon friendship and good character has the three horses of self-control, renunciation, and vigilance.

20 He who stands in that imaginary chariot when it is controlled by the reins of good character abandons the fear of death and goes to the world of Brahmā.

* = the "succession of rebirths"; presumably, the same as the "vast round of rebirth" at 6.5 above.
† = the "taking up residence along the journey."
‡ = is not reborn. § = the body.
‖ = the Lord of Death. The word *yāmya* here also means "what must be governed."

11(80) *The Dispelling of Grief (continued)*

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

8.1 When that most excellent of the Kurus had heard Vidura's statement, he burned with grief for his sons, and then he fainted and fell to the ground. Bhārata, when his relatives Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana and Vidura the steward saw him lying on the ground unconscious, they and Saṃjaya and other friends and the trusted door-keepers sprinkled him with cool, refreshing water and fanned his body vigorously with their hands and with palm-fronds. They sat, waiting upon Dhṛtarāṣṭra, who stayed in this condition for a very long time.

5 After a long time that lord of earth regained consciousness. He was overwhelmed with thoughts of his sons, and he lamented at length. "I say, 'To hell with being a man and everything that goes with being a man! All the miseries that occur over and over again are rooted in this!' The misery that comes upon one at the loss of his sons, or at the loss of riches, or at the loss of kinsmen or affines is tremendous! Lord, it is like poison, or fire, and it burns my limbs and destroys my mind. When this misery overwhelms a man, he prefers death. And that is what I shall do right now, most excellent of brahmins, since my fortunes have reversed and brought me to this catastrophe."

10 Having said this to his exalted father,* a highly learned scholar of the *brahman*,†—the dazed Dhṛtarāṣṭra lapsed into the most intense grief. The king became silent and lost in thought, O lord of earth.‡ After listening to his son's speech, the lord Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana said this to his son, who was in an agony of grief for his own sons. "O strong-armed Dhṛtarāṣṭra, listen to what I am going to tell you. You are learned, and you are intelligent, and you are well versed in Law and Profit. There is nothing whatsoever that you need to know that you do not know already, O tormentor of your enemies. No doubt you understand that mortals are impermanent. Since the world of the living is unstable, since no one's position lasts forever, and

15 since life ends in death, why do you grieve, Bhārata? And the origins of this hostility occurred before your very eyes, O Indra among kings—it was brought about through the working of Time, which made your son the fundamental cause. The slaughter of the Kurus was destined necessarily,

* = Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vyāsa.
† = the Vedas.
‡ = Janamejaya, addressed by the narrator, Vaiśaṃpāyana.

so why do you grieve for those heroes who have traveled the course that goes the farthest?

"O strong-armed lord of peoples, the exalted Vidura understood it all, and he worked for peace with all his might. But it is my opinion that no being, even if he works at it for a long time, is able to thwart a course of events that is driven by fate. I heard with my own ears what the Gods wanted to be done, and I shall now declare it to you.

"Are you going to settle down?°

20 "Once in the past I hurried to Indra's hall of assembly. I felt refreshed° when I got there. I saw the Gods gathered there and all the divine seers, with Nārada at their head. And, O lord of earth, I saw that Earth had come before the Gods because she needed something done. Earth went up to the assembled Gods and said to them, 'Illustrious ones, quickly take care of that job you promised you would do for me in the house of Brahmā.' When he heard what she said, Viṣṇu, who is adored by the whole world, smiled and said to Earth in that assembly of the Gods. 'The eldest of Dhṛtarāṣṭra's one hundred sons, "Duryodhana" he is called, will take care of that job of yours. Once you get him as a lord of earth, the job you need done will be

25 done. Because of him the lords of the earth will gather together on the Field of Kuru,* and attacking each other with sharp weapons, they will kill each other. And so, Goddess, your burden will be eliminated in a war. Go quickly to your own place and support the worlds, beautiful lady.'

"King, your son was a piece of Kali† born in Gāndhārī's belly to effect the destruction of the worlds. He was unforgiving, fickle, irritable, incorrigible. His brothers sprang up through the operation of fate, and they were like him. Śakuni, his mother's brother, and Karṇa, his very best friend, and the princes who joined with him sprang up on the earth for the sake of destruction. O strong-armed prince, Nārada understood the truth of this

30 matter. O lord of earth, your sons perished through their own fault. Do not grieve for them, O Indra among kings, there is no reason for grieving. Really, the sons of Pāṇḍu have not done the least wrong, Bhārata. Your sons were vile, and they harmed the earth.

"Blessings upon you! Certainly this was all conveyed to you before by Nārada° at the gathering for Yudhiṣṭhira's Royal Consecration: 'The Pāṇḍavas and the Kauravas will perish when they fall upon each other, son of Kuntī.‡ Do what you must do.' Pāṇḍu's sons were filled with sorrow when they heard what Nārada said. Now this whole everlasting secret of the Gods has been explained to you.

35 "If you understand that what happened here was ordained by fate,

* = Kurukṣetra; see the LCP.
† = Discord personified.
‡ Vyāsa reports Nārada's statement to Yudhiṣṭhira at the Royal Consecration.

might your grief vanish? Might you take pity on the breath of life° that is in you, lord? Might you feel some affection for Pāṇḍu's sons? Strong-armed prince, I heard this whole matter earlier, when it was told at that exalted ritual, the Royal Consecration of the King of Law.* When I told him this secret of the Gods, the son of Dharma tried to avoid war with the Kauravas, but fate was mightier. King, there is no way that any creature mobile or stationary can bypass the sentence of the Lord of Death.

"While you, sir, are dedicated to Law† and are preeminent in understanding—knowing that creatures go and come back again—you
40 do not have your wits about you. If Yudhiṣṭhira the king knew that you were tormented with grief, that you were repeatedly lapsing into such dazed folly, he would give up even his life. That hero always feels compassion even for animals; how would he not feel pity for you, O Indra among kings? Keep your life, Bhārata, because I command it, because fate cannot be averted, and because the sons of Pāṇḍu are merciful. If you go this way, you will be glorified in the world, and the tremendous Merit‡ you would gain, son, would be the same as if you carried out painful asceticism for a long time. Great king, douse that fire of grief for your sons with the water of wisdom every time it blazes up."

45 After listening to the speech of Vyāsa, whose brilliance was unlimited, Dhṛtarāṣṭra reflected for a while and then answered. "I have been driven on by a huge net° of grief, O best of brahmins. Lapsing into dazed folly over and over, I have not been aware of myself. But having heard this statement of yours about what was ordained by fate,° I will keep my life. I will try not to grieve."

After hearing what Dhṛtarāṣṭra said, Satyavatī's son Vyāsa disappeared right there.

11(81) The Women

11.9–25 (B. 9–25; C. 246–755)
9 (9–10; 246). Dhṛtarāṣṭra summons Gāndhārī and prepares to go out to the battlefield. He and the Bharata women drive through the anguished city. Disoriented and disheveled women grieve uncontrollably. Grieving citizens follow the king out of town (1–20).

* = Yudhiṣṭhira.
† Text note: see the endnote. The indication "text note" in these footnotes always signals that the translation is based on a reading of the text that is different from the printed Pune text. These are listed in Appendix 1, "List of Departures from the Pune Text," and they are usually explained in the endnotes to the translation.
‡ = dharma.

10 (11; 289). Dhṛtarāṣṭra's party encounters Kṛpa, Aśvatthāman, and Kṛtavarman, the sole survivors of the Kaurava army (1). Kṛpa praises her sons' valor to Gāndhārī and describes the killing of Draupadī's sons and kinsmen (5–10). He then explains that they are running because they cannot stand up to the Pāṇḍavas and begs leave to hurry on. They do so (10–20).
11 (12; 313). Yudhiṣṭhira, followed by the women of his party, goes to Dhṛtarāṣṭra, who is on the bank of the river Gaṅgā amidst throngs of shrieking women. These women criticize Yudhiṣṭhira (1–5). Yudhiṣṭhira greets the blind old king, who then tries maliciously to crush Bhīmasena in his strong embrace. Kṛṣṇa has foreseen this possibility and prevents Bhīma's death by substituting an iron effigy for the real Bhīma (10–30).
12 (13; 343). Kṛṣṇa scolds Dhṛtarāṣṭra for his weakness in the face of Duryodhana's wickedness and tells him to let go of any grudges he has against the Pāṇḍavas. Dhṛtarāṣṭra agrees and reconciles with them (1–15).
13 (14; 360). The Pāṇḍavas then approach Gāndhārī, who wants to curse Yudhiṣṭhira. But Vyāsa has fathomed her intention, and he appears and counsels his daughter-in-law that now is the time for peace (1–10). She claims that grief alone was her motive. She harbors no grudge except for Bhīmasena's low blow against Duryodhana in their club-duel (10–15).
14 (15; 381). Bhīma is afraid of Gāndhārī. He acknowledges he fought unfairly against Duryodhana, and he pleads with Gāndhārī to understand the necessity of his stopping the wicked Duryodhana (1–10). She acknowledges that Duryodhana was wicked, but complains about Bhīma's grotesquely drinking the blood of Duḥśāsana on the battlefield. Bhīma lies, denying he really did so. He ends by blaming Gāndhārī for failing to restrain her sons' wickedness (10–15). Gāndhārī complains that Bhīma has not left her and Dhṛtarāṣṭra even one son to comfort them (20).
15 (15; 405). Yudhiṣṭhira, in despair, meets Gāndhārī's anger by urging her to curse him. Her eyes catch sight of his finger-nails as he prostrates himself before her, and his nails are deformed. Her anger is thus dissipated, and she consoles the Pāṇḍavas (1–5). They then approach their mother, Kuntī, and she greets them tearfully (5–10). Draupadī is lamenting grievously. Kuntī takes her over to Gāndhārī, who comforts and consoles her and urges her to stop grieving (10–20).

16–25 (B. 16–25; C. 427–755). (81a) Gāndhārī's Vision of the Battlefield and Her Lament.

Janamejaya said:

9.1 After the blessed Vyāsa had gone, what did that lord of the earth Dhṛtarāṣṭra do? O brahmin seer, please spell that out for me.

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

O highest of men, after Dhṛtarāṣṭra listened to all of this, he was in a trance for a while, unaware of his surroundings. Then he told Saṃjaya, "Hitch up my chariot." And to Vidura he said, "Bring Gāndhārī and all the Bharata women here right away. And bring my sister-in-law Kuntī and any other young women there." After he, now determined to do what was Right* said this to Vidura, who knew what was Right better than anyone, Dhṛtarāṣṭra, his mind numbed with grief, got onto his chariot.

5 Gāndhārī was tormented with grief, but she was energized by her husband's command, and she rushed to the king with Kuntī and the other women. When they joined the king they were filled with intense grief, and upon greeting each other they shrieked violently. The steward,† who was himself suffering even more than they were, calmed them down. Next he got the sobbing women up on their rides and then went out of the city.

Then a loud wail went up in all the houses of the Kurus. The whole city, including the children, was riven with grief. Women whose lords had been killed were now in the gaze of common men—women whom not even the 10 hosts of the Gods had ever seen! Having set their lovely tresses free to fly° and taken off their ornaments, those women, clad only in simple shifts, ran to and fro helplessly.° They emerged from houses that looked like snow-capped mountains, like does leaving secluded mountain valleys° when the leader of their herd has been killed. Several groups of distraught women in the throes of grief ran about as if they were in the girls' yard; and holding onto each others' arms, they wept for their sons, brothers, and fathers—it was as if they were acting out the destruction of the world at the end of an Age. Babbling and crying, running hither and thither, they were out of 15 their minds with grief and had no sense of propriety. Young women who used to be modest even before their friends, now appeared shamelessly before their mothers-in-law in simple shifts. Women who earlier had comforted each other in the most trifling sorrows now ignored each other staggering about in grief.

The king, in shock amidst thousands of these women wailing, went out of the city straight for the field of battle. Artisans, merchants, vaiśyas, and those that live doing any and every kind of job all went out from the city behind the king. The clamor of all those afflicted women bewailing the

* = dharma. † = Vidura.

20 destruction of the Kurus became tremendous and shook the worlds. They were like beings on fire when the end of an Age has arrived. The creatures there thought, "The end must be upon us!" The people of the city were shrieking loudly. They had been very devoted to the Kurus, great king, and they were devastated at their destruction.

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

10.1 Having gone a mere *krośa*,* they saw the great warriors Kṛpa Śāradvata, Droṇa's son Aśvatthāman, and Kṛtavarman. When these three saw the king, that ruler with the eye of wisdom,† they spoke to him as he wept, sobbing and choking back their own tears.

"Great king! Your son did something extremely difficult, and now that lord of the earth has gone with his following to the heavenly world of Śakra.‡ We three are the only warriors of Duryodhana's army who escaped. Every other one of your warriors has perished, O bull of the Bharatas."

5 After he said this to the king, Kṛpa Śāradvata then made this statement to Gāndhārī, who was tormented with grief for her sons. "Fighting fearlessly, your sons slew many hosts of the enemy, and they went to their deaths doing the deeds of heroes. It is certain they have gone to the spotless heavenly worlds that are won on the sharp blades of weapons.° They have acquired radiantly shining bodies there, and now they pass their time like the deathless Gods. Not one of these heroes turned his back in battle. Not one of them who met his death on the blade of a weapon begged for mercy. They say that death on the blade of a weapon in battle is the most ancient and the very highest course a kṣatriya can go; you should not grieve for them.

10 "And their enemies, the sons of Pāṇḍu, are not doing very well, queen. Listen to what we did, following Aśvatthāman's lead: When we heard that Bhīmasena had killed your son§ Unlawfully,‖ we entered the sleeping camp of the Pāṇḍavas, and it was a massacre! All those Pāñcālas, those sons of Drupada, Dhṛṣṭadyumna first, were killed, and Draupadī's sons were put down too. After butchering that whole bunch of the enemy's boys we ran away, for the three of us cannot stand up to them in battle.# Those mighty warriors the Pāṇḍavas will be coming soon, and gripped with rage, they 15 will be seeking to avenge this grievance. Once they have heard that their sons were cut down with no awareness of what was happening, those heroic bulls of men will try to track us down right away, glorious woman. Since we have sinned against the sons of Pāṇḍu, we cannot stand against them.

* = a distance of between one mile and two, depending upon specific local standards; see the glossary.
† = a euphemistic and ironic reference to Dhṛtarāṣṭra's blindness.
‡ = Indra. § = Duryodhana. ‖ = *adharmeṇa*.
That is, against the Pāṇḍavas, who had camped some ways away that night at Kṛṣṇa's direction.

"Excuse us, queen. Do not let your heart settle in sorrow.

"Excuse us, king. Recover your firmest bearing. You must see that the Law of *kṣatra* ends only in death."

O Bhārata, when Kṛpa, Kṛtavarman, and Droṇa's son had said this to the king and walked round him on the right, those exalted men, looking back at the wise king Dhṛtarāṣṭra as they went, set their horses moving in the direction of the river Gaṅgā.[*] After those three mighty warriors had left that place, king, they took their leave and each went his own way anxiously. Kṛpa Śāradvata° went to Hāstinapura,[†] the son of Hṛdika[‡] went to his own country,[§] and Droṇa's son went to Vyāsa's hermitage. Looking across at each other, those three heroes set out, sick with fear, as they had wronged the exalted sons of Pāṇḍu. Having met with the king before the sun had risen, those heroes, suppressors of their enemies, went their separate ways, great king.

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

11.1 After all the warriors had been killed, Yudhiṣṭhira, the King of Law, heard that his father[‖] had left the City of the Elephant.[#] At this time the grieving Yudhiṣṭhira went to him with his brothers—he who was in an agony of grief over the dead boys° went to Dhṛtarāṣṭra, who was overwhelmed with grief for his own sons. Yudhiṣṭhira was accompanied by the exalted Dāśārha hero,[**] and Yuyudhāna,[††] and Yuyutsu.[‡‡] Draupadī, shattered by grief, in extreme pain, followed after him, along with the young Pāñcāla women who had gathered there.

O you best of the Bharatas,[§§] Yudhiṣṭhira saw there along the river Gaṅgā throngs of women shrieking like ospreys.° The king was surrounded by thousands of these tormented women with their arms up in the air, wailing and uttering fair and foul alike. "How can there be a king who knows Meritorious Law and at the same time the unprecedented cruelty° that he slew his fathers, brothers, teachers, sons, and friends? How did you keep your mind, strong-armed prince, once you had caused Droṇa's death, and your grandfather Bhīṣma's, or even after you killed Jayadratha?° What shall you do with kingship, Bhārata, when you don't see your fathers and your brothers? And the unassailable Abhimanyu? And Draupadī's boys?"

The strong-armed Yudhiṣṭhira, the King of Law, went past all those women screeching like ospreys and paid homage to his eldest father.[‖‖] Having dutifully[##] saluted their father, the enemy-withering sons of

[*] They are riding in chariots; see *MBh* 10.9.56.
[†] He returned to his own home in the Kaurava court, though now it would be under the control of Yudhiṣṭhira and the Pāṇḍavas.
[‡] = Kṛtavarman, a Vṛṣṇi prince. [§] = Dvārakā, the city of the Vṛṣṇis.
[‖] = Dhṛtarāṣṭra. [#] = Gajasāhvaya, that is, Hāstinapura.
[**] = Kṛṣṇa. [††] = Sātyaki, a Vṛṣṇi cousin of Kṛṣṇa.
[‡‡] = Dhṛtarāṣṭra's son by a vaiśyā woman rather than Gāndhārī; he had defected to the side of the Pāṇḍavas just before the battle.
[§§] = Janamejaya. [‖‖] = Dhṛtarāṣṭra. [##] = *dharmeṇa*.

Pāṇḍu announced to him their names. But that father was in an agony of grief because his sons had been killed, and he was not pleased as he embraced that son of Pāṇḍu who was the cause of their deaths. After he had embraced and comforted the King of Law, O Bhārata, that vile man went for Bhīma like an eager fire. The fire of his anger was whipped up by the wind of his grief, and he seemed to want to burn Bhīma as if Bhīmasena were a forest. Hari[*] had realized his evil intention toward Bhīma, and he shoved Bhīma aside with his hands and put an iron Bhīma in front of Dhṛtarāṣṭra. (Hari's understanding is vast, and he understood the signs ahead of time. The ever-so-wise Janārdana arranged that contrivance for this circumstance.) When the powerful king took hold of that iron Bhīma with his hands, he broke it, thinking it was Wolf-Belly.[†] The king had the energy and the strength of a myriad elephants, and when he broke the iron Bhīma he crushed his own chest, and blood ran from his mouth. Wet with blood, Dhṛtarāṣṭra fell to the ground; he was like a *pārijāta* tree[‡] with flowers at the tips of its branches. His driver, the learned Gāvalgaṇi,[§] took hold of him, calming and soothing him, telling him, "Do not be like this." Then he let go of his anger. And when his anger was gone, he became magnanimous and cried out, "Oh no! Bhīma!" and he was filled with grief once again.

Vāsudeva,[‖] the best of men, realized that Dhṛtarāṣṭra's anger was gone and that he regretted slaying Bhīma, and he said this to him: "Do not grieve, Dhṛtarāṣṭra. You have not killed Bhīma. It was an iron likeness of him that you destroyed, king. O bull of the Bharatas, I knew you would be enraged, so I pulled the son of Kuntī away when he went between the fangs of death. O tiger among kings, no one is your equal in strength. Strong-armed prince, what man could endure being squeezed by your two arms? Just as no one escapes alive when they meet with Death, no one can live once they've gone between your arms. So I had your son[#] make this iron likeness of Bhīma and I offered that to you, Kaurava. Your mind was drawn away from Law because of your torment over your sons; so, Indra among kings, you wanted to kill Bhīmasena. But it was not right for you to kill Wolf-Belly, king. There is no way your sons will live again. So give your blessing for all that we did in our concern for what was right, and do not let your heart settle into grief."

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

12.1 Then his attendants approached him to clean him up. When he was cleaned up the Slayer of Madhu[**] spoke to him again. "King, you have

[*] = Kṛṣṇa. [†] = Bhīma, Bhīmasena.
[‡] = *Erythrina indica*, the "coral tree," which has bright red racemes of flowers on the ends of its branches before its leaves sprout; see the endnote at 11.19.
[§] = Saṃjaya. [‖] = Kṛṣṇa.
[#] = Dhṛtarāṣṭra's special son Yuyutsu; see the LCP.
[**] Kṛṣṇa is the "Slayer of the Demon Madhu," Madhusūdana.

studied the Vedas and the various learned sciences; you have been taught the Purāṇas and all the Laws for kings.* Though you knew them all, O man of great wisdom, you did not follow their advice, even though you also knew, Kaurava, that the sons of Pāṇḍu were superior in strength and courage.

> " 'The king of steady wisdom who observes his problems for himself finds the right time and place and the highest good.

5
> " 'He who grasps the highest good when it is told to him, but fails to grasp what is beneficial and what is not, commits himself to the wrong policy, and he regrets it after he comes upon disaster.'

"Look how you have acted differently from that,† Bhārata; really, when you were in Duryodhana's control you were not amenable to other advice. It is your own fault that you are vexed, so why try to kill Bhīma? So then, recollect all your own wrongdoing and restrain your anger. Bhīmasena was avenging a wrong done against him when he killed that low-life‡ who spitefully brought the princess of the Pāñcālas§ into the assembly hall. O scorcher of your enemies, look at your own transgression and that of your wicked son; for it was you who abandoned the sons of Pāṇḍu, though they had done nothing wrong."

10 So did Kṛṣṇa tell him, and all of it was true, O lord of peoples. That lord of the earth Dhṛtarāṣṭra then said to the son of Devakī,‖ "O strong-armed Mādhava, it is as you say. But, O you who are always mindful of Law, it was affection for my son that shook me from my firm resolve. Luckily, that mighty tiger of a man Bhīma, who is truly courageous,° was protected by you, Kṛṣṇa, and did not go between my arms!

"But I am no longer disturbed. And my anger is gone. My fever is gone. I want to hug the middle Pāṇḍava hero,# Keśava.** Now that all those Indras among princes have been killed, now that my sons have been cut down, my security and my pleasure rest with the sons of Pāṇḍu."

15
> †† Weeping, he embraced Bhīma,° Dhanaṃjaya,‡‡ and Mādrī's two heroic sons. He consoled them and gave each his blessing.

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

13.1 Dhṛtarāṣṭra gave them leave, and those Kuru bulls—all the brothers—and Keśava, went over to Gāndhārī. When Gāndhārī recognized

* = *rājadharmas.*

† That is, differently from the norm of steady wisdom praised in stanzas 4 and 5, which was juxtaposed to deriving policy from learned authority.

‡ = Duḥśāsana. § = Draupadī. ‖ = Kṛṣṇa.

= Arjuna. ** = Kṛṣṇa.

†† An upajāti triṣṭubh stanza. See Table A6.1 in Appendix 6 for the triṣṭubh classification scheme.

‡‡ = Arjuna.

Yudhiṣṭhira, the King of Law, who had killed all his enemies, that irreproachable woman wanted to curse him, for she was in an agony of grief over her sons. But Satyavatī's son the seer* saw Gāndhārī's evil intention toward the Pāṇḍavas ahead of time and fathomed it completely. The supreme seer doused himself in the river Gaṅgā with its clean and fragrant water and then went to that place with the speed of thought. 5 Observing with a divine eye and a humble mind, he could fathom the thoughts of all creatures.

Wishing her well, the great ascetic spoke to his daughter-in-law† at that moment of time, rejecting it° as a time for cursing and extolling it as a time for peace. "Have no anger toward the son of Pāṇḍu, Gāndhārī. Be at peace. Restrain your passion. Listen to what I'm telling you. Eighteen days ago your son, who craved victory, told you, 'Pronounce a blessing upon me, mother, who am going to war with my enemies.' And as he requested this of you time and time again in his craving for victory, you, Gāndhārī, 10 told him, 'Where there is Law there is victory.' I can recall nothing you have ever said, Gāndhārī, that was inaccurate or false, for you are so circumspect. Having taken such thorough account of Law and declared it, wise woman, restrain your anger now. Do not be this way, Gāndhārī, lady who speaks the truth."

Gāndhārī said:

Blessed one, I do not resent them, I do not want them to perish. But with the pain I feel for my sons, my mind is almost reeling out of my control.

I must now take care of the Kaunteyas‡ as Kuntī does. I must take care of them now just as Dhṛtarāṣṭra must. This annihilation of the Kurus happened because of wrong done by Duryodhana, and by Śakuni 15 Saubala,§ and Karṇa, and Duḥśāsana. Bībhatsu‖ did no wrong, nor did the Pārtha# Wolf-Belly, nor Nakula, nor Sahadeva, and certainly not Yudhiṣṭhira.

The Kauravas were killed along with the others as they cut each other up making war. I have no complaint with that. But that deed Bhīma did with Vāsudeva watching enraged me! After he haughtily challenged Duryodhana to a fight with clubs, Bhīma realized, as Duryodhana moved about in the fight in many different ways, that Duryodhana was better trained than he. So Bhīma struck him below the navel! Now how could men of courage ever forsake a rule of Law, one that has been clearly taught by the exalted men who know Law, just to save their lives in a battle?"

* = Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vyāsa.

† = Gāndhārī; Vyāsa was Dhṛtarāṣṭra's physical father.

‡ = the three sons of Kuntī, Yudhiṣṭhira, Bhīma, and Arjuna; the reference extends to Nakula and Sahadeva, Pāṇḍu's sons by Mādrī, as well.

§ Both Gāndhārī and her brother Śakuni were the children of Subala, King of Gāndhāra in the northwest.

‖ = Arjuna.

= a matronymic, like Kaunteya—"son of Pṛthā" (another name of Kuntī).

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

14.1 When he heard what she said, Bhīmasena was frightened. He answered her in a conciliatory way. "Whether I did Wrong or Right* there, I did it out of terror, in order to save myself. Please pardon me for that. There was no way I could resist your tremendously strong son by fighting Lawfully, so I did something unfair. I did it with the thought, 'This mighty man, the lone survivor of that whole army, is not going to kill me in a club-duel and claim the kingdom.'

5 "Good lady, you know everything he said to the Pāñcāla princess† when she was in the assembly hall while she had her period and was wearing only one piece of clothing.° We could not enjoy the earth entire with her oceans without checking Suyodhana,‡ so I did it. Your son offended us when he exposed his left thigh to Draupadī in the assembly hall. So, mother, we had to kill your son for that. At that time we abided by the agreement on the orders of the King of Law.§ Your son fired up the tremendous hostility, queen, but it was we who suffered constantly in the 10 forest, so I did it. Now that I have killed Duryodhana in battle,° Yudhiṣṭhira has passed over that hostility safely° and has acquired the kingdom. And we are no longer angry."

Gāndhārī said:

It is not your killing of him, my boy, since now you praise my son to me. He did do everything you tell me now. It is this, Bhārata: In the battle when Vṛṣasena‖ had killed Nakula's horse,° you drank the blood from Duḥśāsana's body! That was a grotesque thing to do! Condemned by strictly observant people, it is something done only by barbarians!° Why did you do this horrible deed? It was not fitting of you, Wolf-Belly.

Bhīmasena said:

One should not drink even another person's blood, how much worse if one drinks one's own! And a brother is just like oneself; there is no 15 difference. Do not be troubled, mother. His blood did not go past my lips° and teeth.# Vaivasvata** knows this. Both my hands were drenched with his blood. Yes, I did terrify my brothers who were already overwrought because they had watched Vṛṣasena kill Nakula's horse in battle. What I said in my rage when he seized the tresses of Draupadī's hair during the dicing still echoes in my heart.†† Queen, I would have fallen away from the Law of *kṣatra* for years without end if I had not fulfilled this promise, so I did it. Gāndhārī, please do not hold this against me as a sin, since earlier you did not keep your sons off of us when we had done them no wrong.

* = adharma or dharma. † = Draupadī. ‡ = Duryodhana.

§ He explains why neither he nor his brothers retaliated at the time Duryodhana exposed his thigh to Draupadī.

‖ = Karṇa's son; Gāndhārī speaks in error here; see the endnote.

Bhīma is not being truthful here; see the endnote.

** = Yama, the Lord of Death.

†† When Duḥśāsana tried to strip Draupadī naked during the dicing match, Bhīma swore he would drink that villain's blood; see van Buitenen, 2: 146.

Gāndhārī said:

20 As you, unconquered, were slaying this old man's hundred sons, why, my boy, did you not spare one of them, one who had offended just a little, to be an extension of the two of us who are old and have lost our kingdom? Why did you not spare a single staff for this blind couple? Really, son, if there were still some remnant of my sons, I would not feel this pain toward you who finished them off, as long as you only did what was Law.

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

15.1 Gāndhārī, tormented by the killing of her sons and grandsons, then angrily asked for Yudhiṣṭhira, "Where is the king?" Trembling, folding his hands in respect, Yudhiṣṭhira, that Indra among kings, went before her and made this sweet speech to her. "I, Yudhiṣṭhira, am the cruel killer of your sons, great lady. I have caused this devastation of the earth and I deserve to be cursed. Curse me! For after killing such good friends, I am such a bewildered hazard to my friends there is no point in my living, nor in my ruling, nor in my having any wealth."

5 Gāndhārī, breathing in quick pants,° said nothing to the frightened Yudhiṣṭhira, who had drawn near her though he was afraid. Below the edge of her blindfold,° the great lady, who knew Law and saw Law,° saw the tips of King Yudhiṣṭhira's fingers as he bent his body down and fell at her feet. And the king's nails, which had been handsome, became deformed. When Arjuna saw that, he stepped behind Vāsudeva.* But Gāndhārī's anger was gone, and like a mother she consoled the Pāṇḍavas, who were fidgeting and shifting this way and that.

Given leave by her, those broad-chested men then went all together to 10 their mother Pṛthā,° the mother of heroes. Seeing her sons after so long a time,° the great lady was overwhelmed by intense feelings for her sons. She veiled her face with her garment and shed tears. Then, when Kuntī and her sons had stopped their tears, she saw that her sons had been wounded many times by volley upon volley of sharp blades.° Hugging each one of her sons again and again, she was stricken with pain, and she grieved for Draupadī, whose own sons had been killed. She saw that the princess of Pāñcāla had fallen down and was wailing on the ground.

Draupadī said:

O noble lady, where have all your grandsons gone, along with Subhadrā's son? They do not come to see you now, a poor old woman° they have not seen for so long. Of what use is the kingdom to me, now that I am deprived of my sons?

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

Wide-eyed Pṛthā consoled the wailing Yājñasenī,† and she coaxed that 15 young woman who was withered by her grief to get up. She then went with Draupadī over to Gāndhārī, and her sons trailed behind her. To Gāndhārī, who was suffering acutely, went she who was suffering even

* = Kṛṣṇa. † = Draupadī.

more. Gāndhārī, together with her sister-in-law,* then said to the glorious woman, "Do not be tormented with grief, girl. See how even I am suffering miserably. I think this horrifying devastation of the world was brought on by the turning of Time. It necessarily had to be, and it came to pass automatically. What happened here is just what Vidura predicted in the great speech° he made after Kṛṣṇa failed to persuade the Kauravas. Do not grieve for something that cannot be averted, and especially not for what is past. And really, those who met their end in battle should not be mourned. 20 It's the same for me as it is for you. Who's going to comfort me? It was my wrong that brought this eminent family to extinction."

11(81a) Gāndhārī's Vision of the Battlefield and Her Lament

16–25 (B. 16–25; C. 427–755)
16 (16; 427). Gāndhārī now sees, by means of a divine eye, the battlefield strewn with bodies (1–5). The entire party goes to the battlefield, and the women rave with grief (5–15). Gāndhārī then describes the gruesome scene to Kṛṣṇa—the sparkling litter of weapons and armor, the happy carrion-eaters gorging themselves upon the ornamented bodies of the once proud and handsome princes (15–25). She marvels at the contrasts between these heroes' former splendor and the wretchedness of their lying upon the ground as food for animals (25–40). She describes at length the shock, horror, and suffering of the bereaved women (40–55).
17 (17; 487). Gāndhārī spots Duryodhana's body and faints for a moment. She then embraces his body and tells Kṛṣṇa how she had resigned herself to Duryodhana's doom and does not grieve for him but for Dhṛtarāṣṭra (1–5). She compares Duryodhana in life and death and assures Kṛṣṇa that Duryodhana has won the heaven of heroes (5–10). She laments his waywardness and the passing of his rule (15–20). She then describes the grief of Duryodhana's wife, who mourns her husband and their son, Lakṣmaṇa (20–25)
18 (18; 519). Gāndhārī describes the grief of her daughters-in-law in general (1–15). She spots Duḥśāsana and mentions his insults to Draupadī. She recounts futilely urging Duryodhana at that time to abandon Śakuni and make peace

* = Kuntī.

with the Pāṇḍavas (15–25). She returns to Duḥśāsana and expresses horror at Bhīma's drinking his blood (15–25).
19 (19; 547). Gāndhārī describes her son Vikarṇa lying dead amidst dead elephants (1–5), and her sons Durmukha, (5–10), Citrasena, Viviṃśati, and Duḥsaha, who were all killed by Bhīma (10–20).
20 (20; 568). Gāndhārī describes the dead Abhimanyu and Uttarā's passionate mourning of her new husband. Uttarā addresses Kṛṣṇa plaintively and then speaks to the dead Abhimanyu as she caresses his body (1–15). She curses the mighty warriors who ganged up against him, wonders how Arjuna still manages to live, and wishes to follow Abhimanyu in death (15–20). Failing to die, she fantasizes aloud about Abhimanyu's relations with the damsels of heaven. Her mothers and aunts pull her away from Abhimanyu (20–25). Gāndhārī then describes the grief of these women as they mourn Uttarā's father, Virāṭa, the Matsya king (25–30). She concludes, lamenting the war's slaughter of the young (30).
21 (21; 603). Gāndhārī describes Karṇa's body on the field and remembers him (1–5). She describes the lament of his wife (10).
22 (22; 617). Gāndhārī describes the body of an unnamed warrior from Avanti (1). Next she mentions the body of the old Kaurava Bāhlika, Bhīṣma's paternal uncle (1–5). She describes the body of her one son-in-law, Jayadratha, and remembers his attempt to abduct Draupadī (5–10). She describes the crazed grief of his wife, Duḥśalā, her daughter (15).
23 (23; 635). Next Gāndhārī describes the dead Śalya, whose tongue is being consumed by jungle crows, and the women of the Madras mourning him (1–5). She then describes the body of Bhagadatta, who fought in the war atop an elephant (10). She turns next to Bhīṣma, who, arrows radiating from him in every direction, is like a fading, setting sun. She mentions his virtues and his devotion to his father's line (10–25). Gāndhārī next describes Droṇa the teacher (25–30), and then the mourning of his wife Kṛpī (30–35). She describes Droṇa's cremation and the veneration of him by brahmins devoted to him (35–40).
24 (24; 677). Gāndhārī moves next to the family of the ritually pious Bharata Bhūriśravas (1). She quotes the long lament of Bhūriśravas's mother addressed to her dead husband, Somadatta Bharata, describing the distress of her

daughters-in-law (1–10). Gāndhārī reproaches Kṛṣṇa for allowing Arjuna and Sātyaki to have wounded and killed Bhūriśravas unfairly, dwelling upon the arm Arjuna severed and the pleasure he formerly gave to his wives with it (10–20). Next she describes her fallen brother, Śakuni of Gāndhāra, dwelling upon his former trickery and divisiveness. She wonders if he will do the same harm in heaven (20–25) 25 (25; 706). Gāndhārī quickly notes the bodies of the kings of Kāmboja, Kaliṅga, Magadha, and Kosala, and the five Kekayas killed by Droṇa (1–10). Next she mentions the Pāñcāla king Drupada briefly, and the Cedi king Dhṛṣṭaketu, and Vinda and Anuvinda of Avanti (10–25).

Gāndhārī marvels that all the Pāṇḍavas escaped alive from these mighty warriors, and she recalls having realized before the war that her sons were doomed (25–30). Gāndhārī swoons with grief. After recovering, she accuses Kṛṣṇa of having overlooked the hostility between the two phratries, though he could have prevented the war. She curses him to be killed too by internecine strife (30–40). Kṛṣṇa responds haughtily that only the Yādavas might slay the Yādavas; that he himself had already set in motion the sentence she had pronounced. This exchange upset the Pāṇḍavas (40–45).

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

16.1 As Gāndhārī stood there after saying this about the destruction of the Kurus, she saw everything with a divine eye. That illustrious lady, ever devoted to her husband, had performed the vow of being the same as he was, and had thus been constantly engaged in terrific ascetic austerity, and the words she spoke were always true.° Endowed with the power of divine awareness as a favor granted by the great seer of holy deeds Kṛṣṇa,* Gāndhārī lamented many different kinds of fallen warriors.°

Though she was far away, that lady of deep understanding saw, as if she were right there, the awesome, horrifying field where those heroes among 5 men had battled. It was bestrewn with bones and hair, flooded with streams of blood, and littered on every side with many thousands of bodies—blood-befouled, headless bodies of elephants, horses, and warriors—and bunches of heads without any bodies. It was covered with the lifeless bodies of elephants, horses, and heroes and was a gay party for the man-eating Rākṣasas. It swarmed with jackals, jungle crows,° ravens,

* = Vyāsa.

storks,° crows, eagles,° and vultures, and it resounded with the ghastly howling of the jackals.

Then, given leave by Vyāsa, king Dhṛtarāṣṭra and Yudhiṣṭhira and all 10 the Pāṇḍavas went to the battlefield. They went with the Kuru women, and they followed Vāsudeva and that prince whose kinsmen had been slain.* When those women whose lords had been slain reached Kuru's Field, they saw their sons, brothers, fathers, and husbands who had been killed there being eaten by all the different flesh-eaters—jackals, jungle crows, crows, goblins, Piśācas, and night-prowling Rākṣasas. Having seen that the battleground now looked like one of Rudra's playgrounds,† the women were shrieking loudly as they descended from their fancy wagons. The women of the Bharatas were stricken with pain as they looked upon a sight they had never seen before. Some stumbled about amidst the bodies, 15 and others dropped to the ground. These women were in shock and helpless,°‡ and they lost their wits—vast was the wretchedness of the women of the Pāñcālas and the Kurus.

The daughter of Subala,§ who knew Law, looked over the grotesque battlefield where those women out of their minds with misery made a clamorous din. Having seen the slaughter of the Kurus, she greeted the Supreme Person, Puṇḍarīkākṣa,‖ and she said this to him out of her suffering: "Look, Puṇḍarīkākṣa, at all my daughters-in-law whose lords have been killed, their hair disheveled, shrieking like ospreys! O Mādhava! They arrived all together, recalling sons, brothers, fathers, and husbands; now one by one they run to those bulls of the Bharatas.°

20 "O strong-armed man, this field is covered with the mothers of heroes whose sons have been killed. In other places it is thronged with heroes' wives whose mighty men are dead. The place shines brightly, as if the bodies of Bhīṣma, Karṇa, Abhimanyu, Droṇa, Drupada, and Śalya were blazing fires. It is very well decorated with the golden armor and collar-plates° and gemstones of those exalted men, and their bracelets and armlets° and garlands. And it is adorned with the spears hurled from the arms of those heroes, and with clubs, and sharp, gleaming swords, and bows and arrows. In some places groups of delirious flesh-eaters have congregated, while elsewhere some frolic, and in other places they are lying down.

25 "See, mighty hero, that's how the battlefield looks. O Lord! As I gaze upon it, I burn with grief, Janārdana. O Slayer of Madhu, I never imagined the Pāñcālas and the Kurus could be annihilated! It was as if they were the five elements! Eagles and vultures by the thousands, picking amidst the

* = Kṛṣṇa's Vṛṣṇi cousin, Sātyaki, also known as Yuyudhāna.
† = a town's cremation ground.
‡ = *anāthāḥ*, also "husbandless"; see endnote at 9.10.2.
§ = Gāndhārī. ‖ = Kṛṣṇa.

coverings of armor, are tearing their blood-soaked bodies apart, and those horrible beasts are eating them!

"Who could have imagined the demise of Jayadratha? Or Karṇa or Droṇa or Bhīṣma or Abhimanyu? I do now, O Slayer of Madhu, since I have seen those men who seemed unslayable cut down and turned into food for 30 vultures, storks, jungle crows, hawks, dogs, and jackals! Look at those tigers among men who, in the control of Duryodhana, went under the sway of anger! They are like fires completely gone out. They were used to soft, clean beds, but now they are dead and lie on the wide-open earth. Regularly celebrated by bards singing their praises from time to time, they now hear all the different gruesome, horrible cries of the jackals. Those glorious heroes who used to lie upon couches, their limbs slathered with sandal-paste and aloe, now lie in the dust, and the vultures, jackals, and crows toss their ornaments aside while screeching their gruesome, horrid 35 calls over and over. As if still alive and happy and full of the swagger of war, they carry their bows and arrows, their tempered swords, and gleaming clubs. Many who were handsome and had good color have been pawed by the flesh-eaters and lie there in their necklaces of gold,° their eyes bulging like bulls' eyes. Other heroes with arms like iron bars with spikes on the end lie there embracing their clubs, facing them as if they were their dear, loving women. Others, Janārdana, still wearing their armor and carrying their gleaming weapons, seem to the flesh-eaters to be alive, and the beasts do not assault them. But other exalted warriors have had their pretty gold necklaces° scattered every which way as the flesh-eaters 40 dragged them about. And these frightening jackals have tossed aside thousands of strings of pearls° from around the necks of glorious dead warriors.

"Clever bards would celebrate them in the wee hours of every night with the very best songs of praise and flattery. Now the best of women, tormented with pain—women in an agony of grief and pain—mourn them wretchedly, O tiger of the Vṛṣṇis. Drawn and haggard, the pretty faces of these superior women shine brightly, like clusters of red lotuses, Keśava. Those Kuru women over there have stopped crying and are in a state of shock—lost in thought, they go this way and that in their misery. 45 The faces of these Kuru women here have the color of the sun—a coppery, golden hue—from their anger and their weeping. Hearing only incomplete snatches of others' lamentations, these women do not understand each other's wailings. These heroic women over here, after gasping and shrieking and wailing for a long while, shivering in their pain, are quitting this life.

"Many shriek and wail upon seeing the bodies, and others beat their heads with their delicate hands. The earth seems to be crammed with fallen heads, hands, and every sort of limb mixed with every other and put 50 into heaps. And thrilling with horror upon seeing headless bodies and

bodiless heads, the women, unaccustomed to these things, are bewildered. After joining a head to a body, they stare at it blankly, and then they are pained to realize, 'This is not his,' but do not see another one in that place. And these over here, joining arms, thighs, feet, and other pieces cut off by arrows, are overwhelmed by the misery of it and faint over and over again. Some of the Bharata women see other decapitated bodies which the birds and beasts have eaten, and which they fail to recognize as their husbands. Some beat their heads with their hands, O Slayer of Madhu, when they lay eyes upon their brothers, fathers, sons, and husbands killed by the enemy, 55 swords still in their hands, earrings still on their ears.

"The earth is so muddy with flesh and blood one can scarcely move upon it. Those women beyond reproach, unaccustomed to such miseries, now sink into misery° as they drop to the earth littered with brothers, fathers, and sons. Janārdana, look at the many clusters of Dhṛtarāṣṭra's daughters-in-law, like herds of fillies with beautiful manes. What could be more painful to me than this, Keśava, that all these women present themselves in such extreme forms. Obviously I did evil in earlier births, Keśava, since I now behold my sons, grandsons, and brother killed."

Lamenting like this in agony, Gāndhārī caught sight of her dead son.

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

17.1 Already withered with grief, Gāndhārī then saw Duryodhana. She immediately dropped to the ground, like a banana plant lopped off its stalk in a grove. When she regained consciousness, she shrieked over and over again and stared at Duryodhana as he lay there drenched in blood. Embracing him, Gāndhārī lamented pitiably. "Haaa! Haaa! O my son!" she wailed in an agony of grief, her senses all ablur. Burning with grief, sprinkling with her tears his broad, muscular° chest that was still adorned with strings of pearls and his collar-plate, she said this to Hṛṣīkeśa,* who 5 was standing nearby. "O Vṛṣṇi lord, when this war that would annihilate kinsmen stood at hand, this one, this most excellent of kings, his hands folded in respect, said to me, 'My mother must wish me victory in this war between kinsmen.' Realizing the whole of his imminent disaster, I said to him, O tiger among men, 'Where there is Law there is victory. Since you are not at all confused when you are fighting, my boy, you shall certainly arrive like a God in those celestial worlds that are won by sharp weapons.' That is what I told him before. I do not mourn him, lord, but I grieve for poor Dhṛtarāṣṭra, whose relatives have all been killed.

"Look at my son, Mādhava, as he lies on a hero's bed—quick-tempered, 10 an expert shot,° intoxicated with war, the best of warriors. The scorcher of the enemy who would go in the van of the specially consecrated fighters now lies in the dust. See how Time turns! It is certain that hero Duryodhana has gone upon a final course that is very difficult to obtain;

* = Kṛṣṇa.

for he lies here face up like this on the bed that heroes use. Kings used to surround him and entertain him; now vultures sit around him as he lies dead upon the face of the earth. Women used to fan him with the most exquisite fans; now birds fan him with the beating of their wings.

"This mighty, strong-armed man of real courage was brought down in the war by Bhīmasena the way an elephant is brought down by a lion. Look at Duryodhana, Kṛṣṇa, as he lies there drenched in blood, cut down by Bhīmasena, who raised his club against him. O Keśava, that strong-armed man who once led* eleven armies into battle met his end because of his misguided policy.† This great bowman, this great chariot-warrior Duryodhana lies here, brought down by Bhīmasena the way a tiger is brought down by a lion. Ill-fated, he was contemptuous of Vidura and his father—a dim-witted fool, he went under the sway of death because of his contempt for his elders.

"For thirteen years the earth was his without any rival; now my son, a lord of the earth, lies dead upon that earth. Kṛṣṇa, I saw the earth filled with elephants, cattle, and horses because Dhṛtarāṣṭra's son ruled. But it did not last long, Vṛṣṇi. Now, strong-armed man, I see it empty of elephants, cattle, and horses because others rule it now—am I really alive, Mādhava?

"And look at what is even more painful than the killing of my son—these women sitting in waiting around these heroes killed in battle! O Kṛṣṇa, look at Lakṣmaṇa's mother‡ with her full hips! Her hair disheveled, lying in the crook of Duryodhana's arm, she looks like a golden *vedi* altar.§ When that strong-armed man was alive, this spirited girl probably used to enjoy herself in those fine arms of his. How does this heart of mine not break into a hundred pieces as I look upon my son killed in the war along with his son? Now that woman beyond reproach kisses her blood-soaked son, and now she of lovely thighs caresses Duryodhana with her hand. How can this spirited woman mourn both a husband and a son? For she seems to be engaged in doing just that. Now, having looked over at her son, Mādhava, that long-eyed woman is beating her head with her hands. And now she falls upon the chest of that heroic man, the king of the Kurus. She looks like a white lotus amidst other white lotuses, since the poor woman earlier cleaned off the faces of her husband and her son.

"If the teachings of tradition are true, and if all that we have learned is too, then surely this king has arrived in those worlds that are won by the might of one's arms."

Gāndhārī said:

18.1 Mādhava, look at my hundred sons who never wearied! Most of them were killed in the battle by Bhīmasena's club! And this is even more painful

* = *anayat.*
† = *anayāt;* the similarity of the Sanskrit words is one of the points here.
‡ Lakṣmaṇa was Duryodhana's son.
§ That is, having the figure of an hourglass—full-breasted and full-hipped with a slender waist.

to me now: That my young daughters-in-law are running around, their hair loose, their sons killed in battle; that these poor women who usually move about on lofty terraces must now touch the blood-soaked earth with their ornamented feet. In the agony of their grief they move like madwomen, lurching and whirling, scattering vultures, jackals, and crows. One over here with a perfect body, her waist no bigger than two hands might measure, is pained too much at seeing the horrible butchery and falls down.

O strong-armed man, my heart cannot settle down since I saw that princess, Lakṣmaṇa's mother!

Some see brothers dead on the ground, others husbands, others sons, and those women fall upon them, taking hold of their arms with their own lovely arms. O you who have never been conquered, listen to the crying of these women, middle-aged women and old women too, whose relations were killed in the dreadful butchery. Look, mighty one, how they stop, exhausted, or confused, when they come to the hulls of chariots and the bodies of dead elephants and horses. Look, Kṛṣṇa, how another one stops and picks up the head of one of her kinsmen, a head with a prominent nose and pretty earrings that was lopped from its body.

O you who are blameless, I guess the evil these women beyond criticism did in previous lives—and I as well, so dim-witted am I—must not have been small. The King of Law* now repays us, Janārdana. O Vṛṣṇi, there is no erasing either good or evil deeds.

Look at these women in the prime of their lives, their breasts and bellies lovely; born in good families and demure; their hair, eyes, and eyelashes dark. Mādhava, look at them talking like gabbling geese, or whooping raucously like cranes;° or fallen down, bewildered by grief and pain. O Lotus-eyes,† these women's perfect faces are like fully opened lotuses, and the sun's harsh rays are scorching them. And, Vāsudeva, ordinary men are now gawking at the harem° of my sons, who were jealous and fiercely proud like rutting elephants.

Look, Govinda,‡ at the shields that seem like hundreds of moons upon the ground, and the flags that look like suns, and my sons' shiny golden armor and golden collar-plates; and see how their helmets look like fires well fed with offerings.

And here lies Duḥśāsana, felled by the enemy-slaughtering hero Bhīmasena with his hero-slaughtering club. Look at my son, Mādhava! His whole body is wet with his blood, which was drunk by Bhīma, who, urged on by Draupadī, recollected all Duḥśāsana's torments at the dicing match. O Janārdana, when the princess of Pāñcāla had been won in the game, Duḥśāsana, who was trying to please his brother§ and Karṇa, said to her in that assembly of men, "O Pāñcālī, you are our wife and slave,

* = Yama, the Lord of Death, the ultimate requiter of right and wrong.
† = Kṛṣṇa. ‡ = Kṛṣṇa. § = Duryodhana.

along with Sahadeva and Nakula and Arjuna. Hurry up and get to our palace."

Kṛṣṇa, I then said to Duryodhana the king, "Son, get away from Śakuni.* He has already been roped with the noose of death. Look out for him. Your uncle's mind is very wicked, and he likes quarrels. Hurry up and 25 leave him, son, and make peace with the Pāṇḍavas. Hey, stupid! You are paying no attention to the unforgiving Bhīmasena as you hit him with the sharp, iron arrows of your words. It is as if you were hurling fire-brands at an elephant." But he was wild and cruel, and calculating his verbal darts with care, he spat his poison at them the way a snake spits at bulls.

Here lies Duḥśāsana, his arms thrown wide. He was killed by Bhīmasena the way a great bull is killed by a lion. Bhīmasena, out for revenge,° did something extraordinarily savage when he drank Duḥśāsana's blood in a fit of rage in the battle.

Gāndhārī said:

19.1 Mādhava, here is my son Vikarṇa, who was generally esteemed for being wise.° He lies here on the ground cut down by Bhīma, who did this a hundred times. O Slayer of Madhu, Vikarṇa lies in the middle of some elephants, like the sun encircled by dark blue storm clouds in the autumn. His large hand encased in a wrist-guard, calloused from holding a bow, has somehow been mangled by the vultures trying to eat it. His poor wife tries ceaselessly to ward off the vultures eager for their meat, but the girl cannot 5 do it, Mādhava. This young hero Vikarṇa was a captain, O bull among men. He was used to comfort, and he deserved comfort. Now, Mādhava, he lies in the dust. But the Goddess of the Splendor of the Earth† does not abandon° this best one of the Bharatas even now, as the exposed parts of his body have been pierced by iron arrows and the barbed shafts of lotus-reed arrows.

And here, face up, lies Durmukha,‡ who killed brigades of the enemy in the war. He was killed by that hero of battle§ as that one kept his promise. Kṛṣṇa, his face has been half-eaten by the animals! But it shines all the more, son, like the moon on the seventh night.° Really, Kṛṣṇa, how could my son, a hero with such a face, be cut down in the war by the enemy and 10 now be gulping down dirt? Dear friend, no one could stop Durmukha at the front line‖ of the battle. How was he killed by the enemy, this winner of the worlds of the Gods?

O Slayer of Madhu, look at Dhṛtarāṣṭra's son Citrasena lying dead upon the earth. He was a model for all bowmen. He still wears his pretty ornaments and garlands, and wailing young women withered by grief sit around him, along with the packs of scavengers. There is the clamor of the women's wailing and the growling of the animals—this incongruous scene is eerie, Kṛṣṇa!

* = Gāndhārī's brother. † = Lakṣmī. ‡ = Bad-face," or "Hard-face."
§ = Bhīma. ‖ Literally, "face."

The young captain Viviṃśati always had the best women around him, 15 but now he lies fallen in the dust, Mādhava. More than twenty* vultures sit surrounding that hero Viviṃśati, who was killed in the slaughter, his armor shredded by arrows. In the war that hero penetrated the Pāṇḍavas' army, and now he's gone to bed and sleeps like a virtuous man. Look at Viviṃśati's extremely bright face, Kṛṣṇa—graced with a smile, its nose and brows beautiful, it looks like the lord of stars.† Vāsava's‡ women have surrounded that good man° by the thousands, the way the damsels of the Gods surround a Gandharva at play.

Who could endure Duḥsaha,§ that courageous killer of whole armies of heroes, who shone so brilliantly in the war, who was annihilation for the 20 enemy? Duḥsaha's body seems to be completely hidden under arrows, it looks like a mountain covered with *karṇikāra*‖ trees in bloom.° With his necklace of gold and his shining armor, even Duḥsaha dead looks like White Mountain° with fire blazing upon it.

Gāndhārī said:

20.1 Mādhava, that one whom they say had half again more strength and courage than his father or you, Dāśārha; who was as proud and haughty as a lion; who by himself penetrated my son's virtually impenetrable army—that one# who was death for others, has now himself gone under the sway of death. Kṛṣṇa, I see that the luster of Abhimanyu the son of Kṛṣṇa,** whose brilliance was unlimited, does not fade even though he is dead. And that pitiable, suffering girl, Virāṭa's daughter,†† the daughter-in-law beyond reproach of the Gāṇḍīva bowman,‡‡ grieves for that hero, her 5 husband. His wife, Virāṭa's daughter, has gotten right next to her husband, Kṛṣṇa, and she caresses him with her hand. Having kissed Saubhadra's§§ face, which looks like a lotus in full bloom atop his neck of three folds,° that glorious and spirited woman of such alluring bodily beauty, always so demure before, now embraces him as if she were drunk with Mādhvīka liquor. Kṛṣṇa, she has undone his gilded armor, and now she is looking over his body that is smeared with blood from his wounds.

The girl is speaking to you, Kṛṣṇa,‖‖ as she gazes upon his body. "O 10 Lotus-eyes! This one who had eyes like yours has been killed. O you who are blameless, he was like you in strength and heroism and brilliance and beauty. But now, knocked down to the ground, he sleeps too soundly."

"O you who are so exquisitely delicate, who used to lie upon Rāṅku deer skins, is your body not sore down there on the ground? You lie there

* = *viṃśa*. † = the moon. ‡ = Indra. § = "Hard to Endure."
‖ = *Cassia fistula*, a tree that, when recently bloomed, will have no leaves but "conspicuous, large, blackish, cylindrical pods hanging on the bare branches" amidst a multitude of bright yellow flowers; see the endnote.
\# = Abhimanyu, the son of Arjuna and Kṛṣṇa's sister Subhadrā.
** That is, Arjuna, who is sometimes called, together with Kṛṣṇa Vāsudeva, one of the two "Kṛṣṇas."
†† = Uttarā. ‡‡ = Arjuna. §§ = Abhimanyu.
‖‖ Kṛṣṇa was Abhimanyu's maternal uncle.

having flung wide your two arms adorned with golden armlets—their skin is hard with welts from the bow-string, and they are so long they have the reach of elephants' trunks. You must be sleeping very soundly, as if worn out from a lot of hard work, for you say nothing to me as I prattle on in agony.

"Noble one, where are you going to go now that you've left your mother, noble Subhadrā, and your fathers, who are likenesses of the Thirty Gods, and me, who am tormented with pain?"

15 Cradling his head in her lap as if he were still alive, pushing aside his blood-matted hair with her hand, she asks, "How could those great warriors kill you when you stood in the middle of the battle, you who were Vāsudeva's nephew and the Gāṇḍīva bowman's son? Damn those cruel men who defeated you—Kṛpa, Karṇa, Jayadratha, Droṇa, and Drauṇāyani!* Did any of those warrior bulls have any heart when, to my misery, they closed around you and strove to kill you, one boy alone? How, hero, could you meet death as if you were unprotected when you did have protectors? The Pāṇḍavas and the Pāñcālas were watching! How does that hero, Pāṇḍu's son,† that tiger of a man, still live after seeing you killed 20 by many in battle as if there were none to protect you? Neither the vast acquisition of the kingdom nor the defeat of their enemies will give the sons of Pṛthā any joy without you, lotus-eyes.

"I am going to follow you right now to the heavenly worlds you won by your weapons, your Merit,‡ and your self-control. Watch over me there.

"But no one can die before the time has come. It is my wretched fate that I still live after seeing you dead in battle. O tiger of a man, now that you've gone to the world of the ancestors, what new woman will you greet with a tender, laughing voice as if she were me? Obviously you will churn the hearts of the Apsarases in heaven with your terrific good looks and 25 your laughing voice. After you arrive in the heavenly worlds you've fashioned with your good works and met with the Apsarases, please remember the good things I did, Saubhadra, while enjoying yourself as time goes by. You were ordained to have only six months of life with me. In the seventh you went to your end, hero."

As she speaks these useless fantasies, the Matsya king's§ wives pull the miserable Uttarā away from him. And after pulling the tormented Uttarā off, they who are themselves even more tormented—for they have just seen Virāṭa dead—begin to wail and lament. The vultures, jackals, and crows are tearing at Virāṭa's blood-drenched body that lies there all cut up 30 with arrows shot by Droṇa. Those poor, dark-eyed women are helpless and cannot make those birds stop tearing Virāṭa apart. Because of all their

* = Aśvatthāman.
† = Arjuna, Abhimanyu's father and Uttarā's father-in-law.
‡ = dharma. § = Virāṭa, Uttarā's father.

work and their exhaustion, the beauty has left these women's bodies that have roasted in the sun and lost their fair color.

Look at these boys who have been killed—Uttara,* Abhimanyu, and the Kāmboja prince Sudakṣiṇa.° And, Mādhava, look at the handsome Lakṣmaṇa† lying amidst those who were at the front of the battle.

Gāndhārī said:

21.1 And here lies the great bowman, the mighty chariot-warrior Vaikartana.‡ He was completely snuffed out in the war by the Pārtha's brilliance, as if he were a burning fire. Look at Karṇa Vaikartana, who cut down many super-warriors himself, but now lies fallen on the ground, his body drenched in streams of blood. Unforgiving, long angry, this great archer, this mighty chariot-warrior was cut down in the war by the Gāṇḍīva bowman, and now the hero sleeps. It was he whom my sons put in front when they fought, the way elephants put the leader of their herd in front; they were mighty warriors, but they were afraid of the Pāṇḍavas. 5 He was brought down in battle by the left-handed archer§ the way a tiger is brought down by a lion, or one bull elephant by another bull in rut. Now, O tiger among men, their hair flying loose, his wives have gathered together and sit wailing around this hero cut down in battle. Because of him the King of Law, Yudhiṣṭhira, was constantly nervous and did not sleep for thirteen years, he was so worried. He was unassailable by his enemies in battle, as was Maghavan‖ to his enemies. He was brilliant like the fire at the end of an Age, and he was firm and steady as the Snowy Mountains.# Mādhava, that hero who was Duryodhana's refuge lies dead on the earth, like a tree broken by the wind.

10 And look at Karṇa's wife, Vṛṣasena's** mother, wailing wretchedly. She has fallen to the ground crying:

> †† "Surely your teacher's curse° had followed after you when the earth swallowed up the wheel of your chariot.° Then in battle amidst your enemies an arrow of Dhanaṃjaya's took off your head."
>
> When the mother of Suṣeṇa‡‡ saw the never-wavering, strong-armed Karṇa, still wearing the collar-plate that was fixed with gold, she was extremely distraught. Oh no! Now, she has fallen down unconscious.
>
> That exalted man has been reduced to just a few remnants by the animals ravenously eating his body; he is not very pleasant

* = Virāṭa's son and Uttarā's brother. † = Duryodhana's son.
‡ = Karṇa. § = Arjuna. ‖ = Indra. # = the Himālayas.
** = one of Karṇa's three sons.
†† These are four upajāti triṣṭubh stanzas; see the technical endnote at 21.11–14.
‡‡ = another son of Karṇa.

to look at, the way the moon is not on the fourteenth day of the dark half of the month.

She is writhing on the ground where she fell. Now, on her feet again, she is sad. She covers Karṇa's face with kisses. In agony over the killing of her sons,* she wails and wails.

Gāndhārī said:

22.1 This hero from Avanti† was brought down by Bhīmasena; though he has many kinsmen, the vultures and jackals are eating him as if he had none. Look at him, O Slayer of Madhu. He made a slaughter of his enemies, but now he lies on the bed of heroes, drenched in blood. Jackals and storks and various other carrion-eaters pull him this way and that. See how Time turns! That hero from Avanti rushed to the battle call. Now weeping women sit around him as he lies upon the hero's bed.

5 Look, Kṛṣṇa, at the great bowman Bāhlika,‡ the wise son of Pratīpa,§ killed by a *bhalla* arrow. He looks like a sleeping tiger. Even though he is dead, the color of his face shines very brightly, like the full moon high in the sky on Full Moon Day.

Vṛddhakṣatra's son Jayadratha‖ was brought down in battle by Arjuna, the son of the Punisher of Pāka,# who was filled with grief at the death of his son** and was keeping a promise he had made.° Look at that Jayadratha, who, though he was protected by others, was killed by the exalted one fulfilling his pledge while he was conquering eleven armies.°†† Now, Janārdana, jackals and vultures eat the once spirited Jayadratha, the 10 lord of the Sindhus and Sauvīras, who was so full of pride. Growling, they drag him into a deep ditch nearby, O never-fallen one, though his devoted wives are guarding him. Women of the Sindhus, Sauvīras, Gāndhāras, Kāmbojas, and Greeks are sitting around him, watching over the great-armed man.

Janārdana, Jayadratha should have been killed by the Pāṇḍavas when he, with the Kekayas, grabbed Kṛṣṇā‡‡ and ran off. But, Kṛṣṇa, since they released Jayadratha out of respect for Duḥśalā then, why have they not shown her that respect again now? My young daughter is wailing in agony. Now she is trying to kill herself; and now she is screaming abuse at

* = Vṛṣasena, Suṣeṇa, and Satyasena.
† Further identification is not possible; see the endnote at 22.1.
‡ = a Kaurava elder, the brother of Bhīṣma's father, Śaṃtanu.
§ = Śaṃtanu's father, Bhīṣma's grandfather, and the great-great-grandfather of the Pāṇḍavas.
‖ See 11.8 above and the annotation for that line.
\# Pāka was a demon slain by Indra; the reference is to Indra's son Arjuna.
** = Abhimanyu.
†† = the eleven armies that made up the entire Kaurava force.
‡‡ = Draupadī.

15 the Pāṇḍavas. What could be more painful to me, Kṛṣṇa, than my young daughter's being a widow and all my daughters-in-law having their husbands killed? Oh no! Look at Duḥśalā now! All her grief and fear seem to be gone as she runs this way and that without finding her husband's head.°

He who blocked the way of all the Pāṇḍavas when they were desperate to help their boy;° he who slaughtered huge armies; now he has himself gone under the sway of death. Women with faces like the moon have now surrounded him and weep for that hero who was supremely difficult to defeat, who was like a rutting elephant.

Gāndhārī said:

23.1 Here, my boy,* before my eyes, lies Śalya, the maternal uncle of Nakula. He was killed in battle by the pious King of Law who knows Law. He who was constantly vying with you in everything,° O bull among men, that great chariot-warrior, the king of the Madras, lies here dead. It was he, my boy, who guided Ādhirathi's† chariot in the battle and destroyed his inner fire like that so the sons of Pāṇḍu would win. Oh damn! Look at Śalya's uncut face as beautiful as the full moon, its eyes like the petals of a lotus— 5 it has been pecked at by the jungle crows. He has a golden hue, and his tongue sticking out of his mouth has the sheen of fired gold. Kṛṣṇa, the birds are eating his tongue!

The wives of Śalya sit, weeping, around that king of the Madras who shone brilliantly in the war and was then cut down by Yudhiṣṭhira. These kṣatriya women dressed in the sheerest of clothes have been shrieking since they found that kṣatriya bull, the king of the Madras. Those women stay there, surrounding the fallen Śalya as if they were young elephant cows standing round their bull mired in the mud. Look at him, the very best of chariot-warriors, the hero Śalya, who gave shelter to others—he lies on the bed of heroes, hewn apart by arrows!

10 Here lies fallen to the earth that splendid scion of Śailālaya, the majestic king Bhagadatta, who used the elephant hook.° He is being eaten by the animals, but the golden garland on his head shines and illuminates his hair. I am sure the Pārtha's‡ battle with this one was dreadful, terrifying, and savage, like the battle of Śakra§ with the demon Bali. That strong-armed man provoked Dhanaṃjaya, son of Pṛthā, to fight with him, and having put himself into jeopardy, he was brought down by the son of Kuntī.

Here lies Bhīṣma who was cut down in the terrifying war. He had no 15 equal in the world in valor or manly power. Look at Śaṃtanu's son, Kṛṣṇa, lying there as a likeness of the sun°—it is as if in the passage of Time the sun had fallen from the sky at the end of the Age. This mighty hero, having

* = Kṛṣṇa. † = Karṇa's. ‡ = Arjuna. § = Indra.

scorched his enemies in battle with the burning heat of his sharp weapons, is a human sun, setting just as the sun sets, Keśava. Look at this hero lying on a bed of arrows, on this bed of heroes used by men of valor. In Merit he is the equal of Devāpi.* Having strewn some iron arrows and barbed lotus-reed shafts to make the best of beds and then laid himself upon it, he lies there as did the blessed Skanda in the reed-thicket.° And the son of Gaṅgā† does not lie on any pillow filled with soft grass, but upon that best of pillows the Gāṇḍīva bowman provided with three arrows.°

20 A man of great glory, who became celibate to preserve his father's rule,° that son of Śaṃtanu lies here, Mādhava. He had no peer in war. Always mindful of Law, he knows Law exactly as it has been determined in the succession of teachers; and he still has the breath of life as if he were immortal,° though mortal he is. Now that Bhīṣma, son of Śaṃtanu, lies here cut down by the enemy, there is none skilled in warfare, none learned in it, and none who is boldly courageous. This hero who knows Law and always speaks the truth, himself spelled out his death in the war to the Pāṇḍavas° when they asked him to do so. This man of great understanding, who saved the Kuru line when it had disappeared, has now been eliminated 25 along with the Kurus. To whom, Mādhava, will the Kurus put their questions about the Laws when Devavrata,‡ that bull among men who is almost a God, has gone to heaven?

Look at Arjuna's tutor and teacher (and Sātyaki's§ too), fallen there—Droṇa, the most excellent teacher of the Kurus. O Mādhava, as the lord of the Thirty Gods‖ knows the four kinds of weapons shot, or as the Bhārgava# possesses tremendous martial energy, so too did Droṇa. He for whom Bībhatsu Pāṇḍava** did an extremely difficult deed° sleeps here dead. All his weapons did not save him. He whom the Kurus stood behind when they challenged the Pāṇḍavas, this most excellent of those who bear 30 sharp-bladed-weapons, Droṇa, was himself sundered by sharp blades. He who moved like a fire as he burned the enemy army lies dead upon the earth, like a fire whose flames have been stilled. Even though Droṇa is dead, Mādhava, his bow is still in his hand, his hand-guard is still in place—he appears to be still alive. As with the Progenitor†† at the beginning of the world, none of the four Vedas nor any of the weapons that can be shot ever lapsed from that hero's memory,° Keśava. Jackals drag away his two holy feet that were honored by hundreds of students, his two feet that merited praise and were praised by bards.

* = Bhīṣma's uncle; his father Śaṃtanu's elder brother, who took up asceticism as a child, leaving the kingdom to his younger brother.
† = Bhīṣma. ‡ = Bhīṣma. § = a Vṛṣṇi warrior; see the LCP. ‖ = Indra.
\# = the warrior-brahmin Rāma Jāmadagnya.
** = Arjuna. †† = Prajāpati.

O Slayer of Madhu, Kṛpī,* out of her mind with suffering, sits pitiably 35 near Droṇa, who was killed by the son of Drupada.† Look at her, Keśava, distraught and crying, hair loose, face downcast, sitting in attendance on her dead husband, Droṇa, the best of those that bear weapons. A celibate ascetic, she sits in attendance upon Droṇa, whose armor was pierced by Dhṛṣṭadyumna's arrows in battle. The most tender Kṛpī, that glorious woman so wretchedly tormented, is now performing the funeral observances for her husband killed in the war. They have placed Droṇa upon the pyre, and, with fires they brought, they have set it ablaze on every side in accordance with the prescriptions. Brahmins who sing *sāmans* are singing the three *sāmans.* These celibate ascetics‡ are throwing 40 bows and spears and the hulls of chariots onto the pyre, Mādhava, which they will burn along with various other weapons. They've put Droṇa, whose own inner fire was abundant, upon it, and now they praise him and weep for him. Others praise him with the three *sāmans* silently. Like putting fire into fire, they offered Droṇa to him who eats ritual offerings.§ Those brahmins who were Droṇa's pupils have circumambulated the pyre, keeping it to their left, and now they go toward the river Gaṅgā, Kṛpī in the van.

Gāndhārī said:

24.1 Look nearby, Mādhava, at the son of Somadatta,‖ who was brought down by Yuyudhāna# and is being pecked at by all those birds. Somadatta appears to be tormented with grief for his son and looks as if he is castigating the great bowman Yuyudhāna. And the faultless mother of Bhūriśravas, flooded with grief, is comforting her husband, Somadatta.

"Luckily, great king, you do not see this dreadful extinction of the 5 Bharatas in the grotesque war of the Kurus that has ended an Age. Luckily you do not now see your son dead—that hero whose emblem was the sacrificial post,** who gave away thousands profusely, who made offerings with many rites of sacrifice. Luckily, great king, you do not hear all the horrible lamentation as your daughters-in-law cry out like she-cranes beside a large lake. Wearing only simple shifts, their dark hair loose, your daughters-in-law run around, their sons killed, their husbands killed. Aaah! It is lucky you do not see that tiger among men dead and being eaten by animals, his arm having been chopped off by Arjuna. Luckily you do not now see your son Śala, cut down in the war as well as Bhūriśravas, 10 nor all your widowed daughters-in-law here. Luckily you do not see that

* = Droṇa's widow; see endnote at 23.34.
† = Dhṛṣṭadyumna.
‡ = celibate pupils of Droṇa's (as made clear in 42) wearing their hair in twisted braids atop their heads.
§ = the God Agni, Fire. ‖ = Bhūriśravas; see endnote at 24.1.
\# = Sātyaki. ** = Bhūriśravas.

golden parasol of the exalted Yūpaketu* broken upon the lower step of Saumadatti's† chariot."

Those dark-eyed wives of Bhūriśravas have surrounded him, and they grieve for the husband Sātyaki killed. Emaciated with grief for their husband, lamenting intensely, they fall face down to the ground. Oh it is wretched, Keśava! How could Bībhatsu‡ do that loathsome deed? He cut off the arm of that sacrifice-performing hero when that one was madly engrossed in fighting and unaware of him.° Then Sātyaki did a deed even more wicked, when he attacked that man of finely honed spirit after 15 Bhūriśravas sat down to die.° "You lie here, one man piously devoted to Law killed Unlawfully by two," scream Yūpadhvaja's,§ wives, O Mādhava. This wife of Yūpadhvaja's, her waist no bigger than two hands might measure, having put her husband's arm in her lap, mourns pitiably. That hand of his would undo her belt, rub her full breasts, caress her navel, her thighs, her bottom, and pull off her skirt. In your presence, Vāsudeva, tireless Arjuna cut it off as Bhūriśravas was engrossed in fighting another in battle. She censures you, Janārdana: "When you are in assemblies, or when you tell others of this, are you going to say that Arjuna's deed was 20 great? Will the Crowned Warrior‖ himself call it great?" Now that excellent woman sits there silently, and her co-wives grieve for her as if for their own daughter-in-law.

The king of Gāndhāra, the mighty and truly courageous Śakuni, was cut down by Sahadeva—a maternal uncle by his sister's son.° He used to be fanned with two whisks on golden rods; now he lies there and is fanned by the wings of these birds. He would create illusions by the hundreds and thousands, but the tricks of that magician were burned up by the fiery brilliance of the Pāṇḍavas. That expert in scams, who defeated Yudhiṣṭhira and won the wide kingdom with trickery in the assembly hall, has now 25 won rebirth.° Birds# sit around Śakuni on every side, Kṛṣṇa, that gambler well trained for the destruction of my sons. He was addicted to this profound hostility with the sons of Pāṇḍu that led to the destruction of my sons, himself, and his whole following. As my sons won heavenly worlds with their weapons, lord, so has even this stupid man won heavenly worlds by the sharp blades of weapons. Even there, O Slayer of Madhu, will he not deviously divide my ingenuous sons from their brothers?

Gāndhārī said:

25.1 Look, Mādhava, at the unassailable Kāmboja king** with the shoulders of a bull! He was used to the carpets of Kāmboja, but now he lies dead in the dust! When his wife spotted his two arms that used to be slathered with

* = Bhūriśravas. † = Bhūriśravas. ‡ = Arjuna.
§ = Bhūriśravas. ‖ = Arjuna.
\# = *śakunta-s;* the similarity to Śakuni's name is one of the points.
** = Sudakṣiṇa.

sandal-paste but now are smeared with blood, she was extremely grieved, and she lamented piteously. Helpless, with her relations far away, she says in the sweetest voice, "Delight never left me when I was in the embrace of these two arms the likes of spike-ended iron clubs, with such beautiful fingers and palms. Deprived of you, lord of peoples, what way shall I go now?"

5 As the beauty of all those different garlands does not forsake them even while they are wilting in the heat of the sun, so too their beauty does not leave the bodies of these women even though they are exhausted.

O Slayer of Madhu, look at that hero, the king of Kaliṅga, lying nearby with a pair of dazzling armlets fixed to his two big arms.

Look, Janārdana, at the young women of Māgadha wailing around Jayatsena, the king of Māgadha. The sound of these long-eyed, lovely-voiced women captivates my ears and my heart and seems to befuddle my mind, Janārdana. Emaciated by grief, wailing, all their jewels scattered about, the women of Māgadha—each of whom has her own well-appointed bed—now lie upon the ground.

10 And here these women, each crying by herself, have surrounded their husband, prince Bṛhadbala,° the king of Kosala. Suffering miserably, stupefied with shock, again and again they pull out arrows embedded in his limbs by the strength of Kārṣṇi's* arms. Because of their fatigue, Mādhava, the faces of these perfect women look like lotuses wilting in the sunshine.

All five° of the Kekaya brothers, heroes cut down by Droṇa, lie there facing toward Droṇa wearing beautiful armlets. Wearing armor of fired gold, their garlands, chariots, and flags coppery red, they are lights illuminating the earth like blazing fires.

15 O Mādhava, look at Drupada, who was felled by Droṇa in the war like a great elephant killed by a great lion in the wilderness. O Lotus Eyes, the wide, white parasol of the king of Pāñcāla shines radiantly, like the autumn sun. The distraught wives and daughters-in-law of old Drupada, having burned the Pāñcāla king, go round him, keeping him on their right.

Out of their minds, his women remove the great bowman Dhṛṣṭaketu, that hero, that bull of the Cedis who was killed by Droṇa. O Slayer of Madhu, this great bowman, having countered Droṇa's shots, lies dead like 20 a tree taken by a river. This heroic king of the Cedis, the great warrior Dhṛṣṭaketu, lies here, having been cut down in the battle after killing enemies by the thousands. O Hṛṣīkeśa,† his wives now wait upon that king of Cedi, who was killed with his army and his relatives and is now pecked at by the birds. Having put the king of Cedi onto their laps, his most excellent women bewail that truly courageous hero lying there, that scion

* = Abhimanyu, son of Kṛṣṇa (Arjuna). † = Kṛṣṇa.

of the Dāśārhas.* And look at his son, O Hṛṣīkeśa, with his beautiful face and lovely earrings. He too was cut down in the battle by many arrows from Droṇa. O Slayer of Madhu, I'm sure he never abandoned his father when that one stayed in battle fighting the enemy, for he does not linger
25 behind that hero now! My son's son, Lakṣmaṇa, the slayer of enemy heroes, followed after his father Duryodhana the same way, O man of mighty arms.

Look, Mādhava, at the fallen princes of Avanti: Vinda and Anuvinda. They are like two flowering *śāla*† trees blown over by the wind at the end of winter. They lie there wearing golden armlets and armor, their garlands spotless, still holding their swords, bows, and arrows, their eyes bulging like those of bulls.

The Pāṇḍavas and you, Kṛṣṇa, were destined not to be killed, since every one of you escaped from Droṇa, Bhīṣma, Karṇa Vaikartana, Kṛpa, Duryodhana, Droṇa's son,‡ the great warrior of Sindhu,§ Somadatta, Vikarṇa, and the hero Kṛtavarman. Those bulls of men could kill even the
30 Gods with the power of their weapons, but they were all cut down in the war. See how Time turns! Certainly there is no charge too heavy for fate, Mādhava, for these heroic kṣatriya bulls were killed by kṣatriyas.

My impetuous sons were dead already, Kṛṣṇa, when you returned to Upaplavya without having accomplished what you wanted.° I was told then by Śaṃtanu's son‖ and the wise Vidura, "Have no affection for your own sons." Their view, son, cannot have been wrong; before long my sons will be ashes.

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

After saying this, Gāndhārī, withered by grief, fell to the ground. Her
35 mind addled by her suffering, she lost her firm grip, Bhārata. Then, with her whole body in the grip of anger, overwhelmed with grief for her sons, her senses reeling, she put the blame on Śauri.#

Gāndhārī said:

Kṛṣṇa, the sons of Pāṇḍu and the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra hated each other. Why did you ignore them as they perished, Janārdana? You who were able to do something, who had many retainers, who stood in the midst of an extensive army, who had an equal interest in both sides, who had heard all that was said? And since you neglected the destruction of the Kurus, O Slayer of Madhu, because you wanted it, O man of mighty arms, now take the result of that. Since I have come to have some ascetic power because of my obedience to my husband, I will curse you with that, O bearer of discus
40 and club, you who are so enigmatic.° Since you ignored your kinsmen, the Kurus and the Pāṇḍavas, as they were killing each other, Govinda, you shall slay your own kinsmen. Even you, O Slayer of Madhu, when the thirty-sixth year is at hand, shall wander in the woods having slain your own kinsmen,° having slain your own family, having slain your sons. You shall arrive at your end by an ignominious means. And your wives, their sons killed, their affines and kinsmen killed, will be running around just as these Bharata women are doing.

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

When he heard this horrible speech, the high minded Vāsudeva said to Queen Gāndhārī with a bit of a smile, "Good woman, no one but I will be the destroyer of the circle of the Vṛṣṇis. I know this to be so. Kṣatriya
45 woman, you are doing what has already been done. The Yādavas cannot be killed by other men, nor even by the Gods or Dānavas, so they will come to their destruction at each other's hands."

When the Dāśārha said this, the Pāṇḍavas were shaken. They were extremely upset and had no desire to live.

* Dhṛṣṭaketu's paternal grandmother was a Dāśārha Yādava princess.
† = *Shorea* [sometimes *Vatica*] *robusta*, a very tall, stately forest tree known for its sturdy wood.
‡ = Aśvatthāman. § = Jayadratha ‖ = Bhīṣma. # = Kṛṣṇa.

11(82) The Funeral Observances

11.26 (B. 26; C. 756–99)
26 (26; 756). Kṛṣṇa answers Gāndhārī further by scolding her for having indulged her wicked son. He counsels her to stop grieving (1–5). Dhṛtarāṣṭra then asks Yudhiṣṭhira for a tally of the dead. Yudhiṣṭhira says that 1,660,020,000 perished and 24,165 are missing (5–10). Yudhiṣṭhira recites the varying fates in the next world of those killed in the war. The level of their reward corresponds to the degree of their enthusiasm and valor in the war (10–20). Dhṛtarāṣṭra expresses worry about all the dead who have no kin present to burn their bodies and perform funeral rites. Yudhiṣṭhira orders his own and Dhṛtarāṣṭra's people to cremate all the corpses, which they do. The king and his party then go to the river Gaṅgā (20–40).

Vāsudeva said:

26.1 Get up, Gāndhārī! Get up! Don't let your heart settle in grief. The Kurus have gone to their end because of your mistakes. Deferring to your wicked son Duryodhana, who was always envious and inordinately full of himself, you judged his wicked deeds to be fine; but they were cruel and harsh because of his hostility,° and they transgressed the commands of his elders.

Why do you want to pin the blame on me for something you did yourself? Anyone who grieves over someone who is dead, or something that has been destroyed, or something that has passed by gains misery from their misery. He comes to two evils.

> [*] A brahmin woman brings forth a baby destined for asceticism, a cow brings forth a draft animal, a mare a race-horse, a śūdra woman a servant, a vaiśya woman a cowherd—but a kṣatriya woman like you brings forth a baby destined for slaughter.

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

After she heard this disagreeable speech of Vāsudeva's repeated, Gāndhārī was silent, her eyes glazed with grief. But the royal seer Dhṛtarāṣṭra, who was now mindful of Law, drawing aside the darkness produced by lack of understanding, questioned the King of Law, Yudhiṣṭhira. "Son of Pāṇḍu, you know the count of the soldiers when they were alive. If you know the count of those killed, tell me."

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

In this war of kings were slain ten myriad myriads, twenty thousands, and sixty-six crores.[†] And, O Indra among kings, there are twenty-four thousand and one hundred and sixty-five missing men.

Dhṛtarāṣṭra said:

Yudhiṣṭhira, to what end have these best of men gone? Tell me, strong-armed man, for I think you know everything.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

Those truly courageous men who enthusiastically offered their bodies in the supreme war have gone to celestial worlds equal to that of the king of the Gods.[‡] Those who fought in the war and died without enthusiasm, thinking, "I have to die sometime anyway," have gone to be with the Gandharvas. But those who wanted to run and stood on the battlefield pleading for their lives, they went to the Guhyakas when they met their end on a sharp blade. But those exalted ones devoted to the Law of *kṣatra,* who stifled all their inhibitions and attacked the enemy in battle when the enemy was pressing them hard, when others were deserting them, when they had lost their weapons, when they were being cut by the sharpened blades of weapons—these dazzling heroes went to the seat of Brahmā when they were killed. Those who were slain out in the middle of the battlefield in some nondescript way have all gone to the Northern Kurus.

[*] A proto-śālinī triṣṭubh stanza.
[†] One myriad = 10,000; 10 myriad myriads = 1 billion; 1 crore = 10 million. The total killed is 1,660,020,000.
[‡] = Indra.

Dhṛtarāṣṭra said:

Son, by what faculty are you able to see this way, like one who has gained higher powers?[*] Tell me, strong-armed man, if I might hear it.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

I gained this blessing as a consequence of the tour of the holy bathing sites I made earlier, during the time I lived in the forest by your command, sir. At that time I saw the divine seer Lomaśa. From him I acquired the faculty of complete recollection.° And prior to that I acquired a divine eye through the discipline of yoga meditation.°

Dhṛtarāṣṭra said:

I should hope, Bhārata, that those bodies may be burned° in accordance with the prescriptions—both the bodies of those people who have none to look after them and those of the people who do. Some have no one to do the rites for them, some never installed the ritual fires. For whom could we do the rites? For there is such a multitude of rites to be performed, son. They whom the eagles and the vultures are dragging this way and that would have heavenly worlds by the rites, Yudhiṣṭhira.

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

After Dhṛtarāṣṭra had said this, the very wise Yudhiṣṭhira, son of Kuntī, gave orders to Sudharman,[†] Dhaumya,[‡] the *sūta* Saṃjaya, Vidura of great understanding, Yuyutsu the Kaurava, and all the other servants and *sūtas,* Indrasena[§] and so on: "My good men, do the rites of the dead for all of them, so no one's body perishes as if he had no one to look after him."

At the King of Law's command, the steward,[‖] Saṃjaya the *sūta,* Sudharman, Dhaumya, Indrasena, and the others procured precious sandal and aloe woods, dark sandalwood, clarified butter, sesame oil, fragrances, and linen cloth. And they made the piles of wood and the smashed chariots and all the different shafts of weapons into pyres. Then, without losing their composure,° they burned those kings carefully according to their ranks and in accordance with the rite found in the prescriptions: Duryodhana and his brothers up to a hundred; Śalya, King Śala, Bhūriśravas, and King Jayadratha; Abhimanyu, O Bhārata, Duḥśāsana's son, and Lakṣmaṇa;[#] King Dhṛṣṭaketu, the great Somadatta and hundreds more Sṛñjayas;° King Kṣemadhanvan,° Virāṭa, and Drupada, the Pāñcālya Śikhaṇḍin,[**] Dhṛṣṭadyumna Pārṣata,[††] and the bold Yudhāmanyu and Uttamaujas;[‡‡] the king of Kosala, Draupadī's sons,[§§]

[*] = a Siddha.
[†] = the family priest of the Kauravas; see endnote at 26.24.
[‡] = the family priest of the Pāṇḍavas. [§] = Yudhiṣṭhira's *sūta* (charioteer).
[‖] = Vidura. [#] = Duryodhana's son. [**] = Drupada's androgynous son.
[††] = Drupada's other son, "scion of Pṛṣata" (Drupada's father).
[‡‡] = brother of Yudhāmanyu; these two Pāñcālas were the regular "wheel-protectors" of Arjuna in the war.
[§§] = the five sons of the Pāṇḍavas with Draupadī.

Śakuni, son of Subala, and Acala and Vṛṣaka;* King Bhagadatta, the unforgiving Karṇa Vaikartana and his sons, the great Kekaya warriors, and the great Trigarta warriors; Ghaṭotkaca† the king of Rākṣasas, the brother of Baka,‡ and King Alambusa;§ and King Jalasaṃdha,‖ and hundreds and thousands of other kings, king. They burned them completely with fires made to blaze high with streams of clarified butter. The offerings for the dead took place for some of those exalted ones. Some
40 sang with *sāmans*, and others mourned in other ways. Along with the sounds of the *sāmans* and the *ṛc* verses and the wailing of the women, a shocked numbness° settled over all beings that night. The fires that were blazing smokelessly and those that were glowing brightly looked like planets shrouded in a thin mist in the sky.

At the command of the King of Law, Vidura burned all those who had come there from various lands and had no one to look after them. Keeping his composure, he gathered them together and put them in heaps by the thousands, and piled them with many logs that were ignited with the help of oil. After Yudhiṣṭhira the King of the Kurus had rites performed for them, he went in procession behind Dhṛtarāṣṭra to the river Gaṅgā.

11(83) The Offering of Water

11.27 (B.·27; C. 800–827)
27 (27; 800). On the bank of the Gaṅgā the Kuru women pour the funeral libations for their dead men (1–5). Praising Karṇa elaborately as the mightiest warrior in the Kaurava army, Kuntī directs the Pāṇḍavas to pour a libation for him too, as he was their elder brother, her son by the Sun (5–10). Yudhiṣṭhira is amazed and upset at this revelation (10–20). Yudhiṣṭhira pours a libation for Karṇa and, with Karṇa's wives, performs for him the rites for the dead (20).

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

27.1 They reached the soothing river Gaṅgā that pious people love, with its many quiet pools and exquisite banks, with great marshes and forests alongside it. The Kuru women then took off their ornaments and their outer garments, and, wailing in great torment, they all made the oblations

* = two brothers of Śakuni, also sons of Subala, king of Gāndhāra.
† = Bhīma's son with the Rākṣasī Hiḍimbā.
‡ = probably the Rākṣasa Alāyudha, who fought with Ghaṭotkaca.
§ = a mighty Rākṣasa who fought for Duryodhana.
‖ = a king of Magadha allied with Duryodhana.

for the fathers, grandsons, brothers, sons, and grandfathers of their own people and for their husbands. Those who knew the applicable Laws also performed the water-rites for their allies who were not kinsmen. As the libations for the heroes were being performed by the heroes' wives, the river Gaṅgā, with its many fine passages giving access to its waters,°
5 spread out even more widely. Dotted with the wives of the heroes, the shore of the Gaṅgā beside that great expanse of water was somber and joyless, not festive at all.

Then, great king, all of a sudden Kuntī, withered with grief, crying, said this to her sons in a quiet voice: "That great heroic bowman, that leader of the herd among leaders of the herds of warriors, who was killed by Arjuna in the war, who was marked with the marks of a heroic man, whom you, sons of Pāṇḍu, thought of as 'the son of Rādhā,' the son of the *sūta*, who shone in the midst of the army as if he were the Lord Sun,* who used to fight against all of you and your followers, who shone conspicuously as he
10 drew the whole of Duryodhana's army behind him, who had no equal at all on the earth in heroic might—perform the libation for this hero who honored his agreements, who never ran away in the midst of many battles, your tireless brother. He was your first-born brother, born of me from the Sun, a hero with two earrings and armor, who looked like the Sun."†

When all the Pāṇḍavas had heard this unwelcome speech of their mother, they grieved for Karṇa and were pained once again even more than before. Then that tiger among men, Kuntī's son, the hero Yudhiṣṭhira, hissing like a snake, said to his mother, "Against the showers of his arrows none but Dhanaṃjaya could stand—how was he your lady's
15 son, the baby of a God from some time before? Every one of us was scorched by the heat of his arms! He would have been like a fire hid in your clothing! How did you conceal him? The Dhārtarāṣṭras worshiped the dreadful power of his arms, and none but the son of Kuntī,‡ warrior of warriors, could take that power from Karṇa. That best of those who bear weapons was our first-born brother! How did you, good lady, give birth to one of such marvelous valor before?

"Aaah! Woman, you have slain us by keeping this secret! Now we and our connections are weighed down with the death of Karṇa, as well as by the loss of Abhimanyu, the killing of our sons with Draupadī, the loss of the Pāñcālas, and the demise of the Kurus. This pain touches me a hundred times more intensely than those! Grieving for Karṇa, I am burning as if I had been put into a fire.
20 "There is nothing we could not have won! Not even what is in heaven! This grotesque butchery that has finished the Kauravas would not have happened!"

* = the God who is the Sun, Sūrya.
† Kuntī refers to the golden earrings and armor which were part of Karṇa's body at birth.
‡ = Arjuna.

Having lamented so profusely, the King of Law, the lord Yudhiṣṭhira, quietly groaning,° poured the libation for him, king. The men and women who stood near him on every side then burst out crying as he made the libation. Yudhiṣṭhira, the wise lord of the Kurus, then had the wives of Karṇa brought to his courtly area° out of love for his brother. Then he, minding Law, immediately performed the rites for the dead with them. Then, his senses in a jumble, he stepped up from the water of the river Gaṅgā.

The Mahābhārata

Translated

Book 12 *The Book of Peace, Part One*

Introduction

The Book of Peace (the *Śāntiparvan*) and its companion, Book 13, *The Book of Instructions* (the *Anuśāsanaparvan*), make up the first canonical library of "Hinduism."[1] This library covers a very wide range of ancient Indian intellectual history and was intended to serve as a comprehensive, brahmin-inspired basis for living a Good Life in a Good Society in a Good Polity.[2] Books 12 and 13 of the *Mahābhārata* comprise four large

1. By "Hinduism" I mean not a single "religion," as Westerners tend to conceive of such entities, but something more like the medieval "sense" of "Christendom," though lacking the institutions of authority that characterize much of Christianity, especially in its Roman form. Thus I use "Hinduism" to mean the loose, brahmin-sanctioned synthesis of social, political, and religious-philosophical themes that eventually moved across most of India as the *sanātana dharma,* "The Everlasting Good Law" of the *varṇāśramadharma,* "The Meritorious Laws of the four social Orders and the four Patterns of Life." This comprehensive and multifaceted set of religious themes emerged from its Vedic past during the half millennium between the Mauryan Empire and the Gupta Empire and became the more or less taken-for-granted foundation of a host of specific cults, institutions, sects, and self-conscious "religions" (e.g., the Śrī-Vaiṣṇavas) which have come into being in India in the last two millennia. This *sanātana dharma* was a synthesis of different themes of the ancient Vedic, ritual religion of *dharma-karman,* as well as themes of the later developments of yoga (seeking absolute personal beatitude and escape from rebirth), and, eventually, themes of *bhakti,* salvation through loving devotion to God. Different forms and permutations of these themes developed and intertwined in various uneven ways during this period, as those still inspired by or making use of the ancient Vedas ("brahmins") contended with the intense challenges and stunning successes of intellectual movements that were non-Vedic and even anti-Vedic (the general Brahminic name for such movements came to be Nāstika, "Naysaying," that is, denying the basic unseen realities which Brahminic religion relied upon; this word is sometimes used in the *MBh* with the virulence of "heathen"). Most noteworthy among these movements were the home-grown materialists (known as followers of Cārvāka), and the three very successful, self-consciously organized religious movements of the Ājīvikas, the Jains, and the Buddhists.

2. This "library" developed as part of the so-called Fifth Veda, "the Veda for women and śūdras," an idea that invites comparison of this corpus to the corpus of texts that came to

anthologies, and the subtexts (each with a complex provenance and history of its own) that make up these anthologies treat many different issues of polity, society, philosophy, and religion. My main purpose in this introduction[3] is to present *The Book of Peace* as a whole, particularly its general structures, and make some suggestions about its place and function in the *Mahābhārata* as a whole. I introduce and discuss the topics and themes of the anthologies and their subtexts, but detailed examination and discussion of the particular contributions the *MBh* anthologies make to the larger Indian discourses on polity, society, philosophy, and religion must be left to others, to particular works that focus intensively on specific issues and subtexts. Ian Proudfoot's recent study, *Ahiṃsā and a Mahābhārata Story*, is a fine example of the kind of detailed and rigorous analysis that many of the individual texts of these anthologies require.[4] Another is the collection of *Nārāyaṇīya-Studien* by Peter Schreiner, Reihnold Grünendahl, Angelika Malinar, and Thomas Oberlies.[5] The specific contributions of the *Mahābhārata* on issues of polity and kingship—topics central to the first two minor books of *The Book of Peace*—have been well surveyed and presented elsewhere.[6] Hartmut Scharfe's recent book *The State in Indian Tradition* systematically examines and presents a great deal of the political intelligence found in *The Laws for Kings* (the *Rājadharmaparvan*), and in its companion, *Law in Times of Distress* (the *Āpaddharmaparvan*), in a general historical treatment. Still useful too is Jan Gonda's *Ancient Indian Kingship from the Religious Point of View*. What is sorely lacking is an orientation to *The Book of Peace* as a deliberate literary and intellectual construction, as a functioning part of the *Mahābhārata*, serving some of the agendas of those people responsible for the epic.

constitute the Vedic canon, as well as to other canonical collections forming in India at the same time (the Jaina Āgama and the Buddhist Tripiṭaka); see my article, "India's Fifth Veda: The *Mahābhārata's* Presentation of Itself." I also suggest below that this library was presented in part as an answer to the emperor Aśoka's efforts to school his subjects in dharma.

3. This introduction is limited by the organization of the *MBh* itself to Book 12, *The Book of Peace*, and does not formally embrace Book 13, *The Book of Instructions*. Since *The Book of Instructions* is basically an extension of *The Book of Peace*, however, much that I say here about *The Book of Peace* applies to *The Book of Instructions* as well, and occasionally I include some mention of Book 13 to keep the overall record straight.

4. See Ian Proudfoot, *Ahiṃsā and a Mahābhārata Story*, which also contains many useful methodological reflections on the study of ancient Indian ideas and institutions generally, as well as being a valuable study of *ahiṃsā* and the didactic *Mahābhārata*.

5. Peter Schreiner et al., *Nārāyaṇīya-Studien*.

6. See J. D. M Derrett, "Rājadharma," which includes a bibliography, and Ludwik Sternbach, *Bibliography on* dharma *and* artha *in Ancient and Mediaeval India*, which is much more comprehensive.

Making Yudhiṣṭhira the King

The Troubled *Jaya* (Victory) of the Pāṇḍavas

The *Mahābhārata* is a troubled story.[7] Its initial recitation was at a comprehensively murderous rite[8] launched by King Janamejaya Bharata,[9] a descendant of Arjuna Pāṇḍava, to kill all the world's snakes in order to avenge his father, Parikṣit, who was killed by a snake.[10] Then its narrative recounts first "The Breach" *(bheda)* between phratries of the ruling Bhārata dynasty, and this is followed by "The Destruction of the Kingdom," or "The War" *(rājyavināśa, yuddha)* that ensued from that breach.[11] The whole of this narrative relates a divinely planned and divinely led purge of the world's kṣatriyas. In almost the same breath that Vaiśaṃpāyana used to describe the *Mahābhārata* to Janamejaya in terms of "Breach" and "War," he also spoke of those themes as being followed by a "Triumph" *(jaya)*.[12] Vaiśaṃpāyana recommended the *Mahābhārata* to King Janamejaya by telling him, "The king who seeks conquest should listen to this history named *Triumph;* for then he will conquer the whole earth and defeat his enemies."[13] But while there certainly is an account of the Pāṇḍava triumph in Book 12, that triumph is exceedingly brief. And, though intense and gratifying, it is surrounded by material that is far from triumphant. The Pāṇḍava *jaya*, in the written Sanskrit *Mahābhārata*, has given way to a process allaying the danger of the new king Yudhiṣṭhira's remorse (the *śānti*, "pacification," of his *śoka*) by instructing him (*anuśāsana*) on the true nature of Right Action (dharma) and Virtue (also dharma) in kingship.[14]

7. Some later literary critics read the epic as a work of art intended to stimulate the aesthetic "flavor" (*rasa*) of "tranquility," "desirelessness" (*śama*). The troubles of the text contribute to this by provoking or suggesting *nirveda*, "radical disaffection." See Gary Tubb, "*Śāntarasa* in the *Mahābhārata*."

8. It was intended to eliminate the entire species of snakes. The *Mahābhārata* tells of several similar slaughters, including the one at the center of its tale, and finds them all problematic in one way or another. See Christopher Minkowski, "Snakes, *Sattras* and the *Mahābhārata*."

9. The descendants of the eponymous ancestor Bharata (including the other main eponymous ancestor of our heroes, namely, Kuru) are known in the epic both as Bharatas and Bhāratas. There is also the adjective Bhārata, which signifies "connected with Bharata or the Bharatas." I try to be more consistent than the epic by generally using "Bharata" when I mean to refer simply to that lineage of people, and "Bhārata" when I intend an adjective. When translating anything from the text, though, I use whichever form the text uses.

10. See Chapters 3 through 56 of *The Book of the Beginning;* van Buitenen, *The Mahābhārata*, 1: 44–130.

11. *MBh* 1.54.18–19, 24; 55.4–5. The first five books of the *MBh* are fairly described as the account of a breach, and war certainly is the theme for Books 6–10.

12. *MBh* 1.55.43, where we have a set of three topics: Breach, Destruction of the Kingdom, and Triumph.

13. *MBh* 1.56.19.

14. See Appendix 4, in which I distinguish three different, though closely related, meanings of the one word *dharma:* (1) Meritorious, Lawful Deeds, Merit, Law; (2) Right, Justice; and (3) Virtue.

This instructional pacification of the king stretches across Books 12 and 13 of the *MBh* and makes up almost one-fourth of the entire Pune text. Whether or not one finds this development a happy one,[15] it was carefully and fully developed by Vyāsa,[16] and the result is quite interesting and important.

The Pāṇḍavas' Triumphant Return to Hāstinapura

After burning the bodies of the dead warriors and pouring their funeral libations, the Pāṇḍavas and the remnants of the Bhārata court waited on the banks of the Gaṅgā for one month to allow the impurity of death to pass. As this month wore on, the world's foremost seers and thousands of other lustrous brahmins gathered round the victorious Pāṇḍavas, offered congratulations, debated the ethics of the war and kingship with Yudhiṣṭhira Pāṇḍava, and then accompanied the Pāṇḍavas when they entered Hāstinapura triumphantly to the tumultuous cheers of the townspeople. Several of the fundamental themes of *The Book of Peace* and the whole *Mahābhārata* are expressed with luminous clarity in the episode of triumphal entry, so I quote it at some length. (Vaiśampāyana is narrating to Janamejaya. Kṛṣṇa has just given Yudhiṣṭhira the final push persuading

15. Some scholars in the past saw the *Mahābhārata* as a Brahminic perversion of an earlier heroic epic, and their inappropriate scorn has not completely dissipated. E. W. Hopkins was in the habit of referring to this part of the *Mahābhārata* contemptuously as "the pseudo-epic." The *Mahābhārata* rests in part on earlier, simpler martial renderings of the travails and glories of warriors, and there may well be some direct remnants of such epic material in our current *Mahābhārata*. But in fact our *Mahābhārata* has developed far beyond the point where it absorbed and assimilated its warrior heritage into quite a different kind of cultural product. It is further likely that, prior to their "classical heroic" renditions, the deeds of the Indian epic heroes had an "archaic epic" past in which their deeds basically enacted mythic and ritual themes (see Yaroslav Vassilkov, "The *Mahābhārata's* Typological Definition Reconsidered"). Sometimes it can be extremely difficult to disentangle the "archaic heroic" mythic themes, the "classical heroic" themes, and the later "religious and didactic" moralizing, to borrow Vassilkov's terms. The *Mahābhārata* is a complex and mysterious creation in which newer elements have been superimposed upon older ones, "forming layer upon layer, becoming somehow connected and united in a kind of symbiotic system . . . demonstrating an oil-and-water coexistence of historically heterogeneous (philosophical and mythological) modes of thinking" (Vassilkov, 255). To this I would add that the fabrication of this triple-layered *Mahābhārata* was a written, that is, literary, achievement in which the authors or redactors mingled mythic narrative, heroic narrative, and moralistic narrative in deliberately nontransparent ways (a point emphasized recently by Alf Hiltebeitel in his "Reconsidering Bhṛguization") for their own sociocultural or political purposes. One may prefer the more vividly powerful descriptions of Homer's profound diatribe against the Gods in the *Iliad*, or one may prefer our *Mahābhārata's* more abstractly intellectual symbolisms, its deliberate obscurities, and its alternately sly and plain rhetorics. But one should not insist on approaching and evaluating a work of art with inappropriate categories, as some scholars of the *Mahābhārata* did at the end of the nineteenth century and early in the twentieth.

16. For the sense in which I refer to "Vyāsa," see note 6 in the introduction to *The Book of the Women*.

him to accept the Bhārata kingship his victory has brought him. Why this persuasion was necessary we shall see later.)

> After Kṛṣṇa said this to him, the king, his eyes like blue lotuses, still feeling great pain, stood up for the well-being of all the world. Persuaded by Vistaraśravas [Kṛṣṇa] himself, . . . the magnanimous tiger of a man Yudhiṣṭhira let go of his spiritual pain and torment. He who had delighted Pāṇḍu at his birth, . . . that treasure of learning, that expert in learning and what is worth teaching, made his resolve and came to peace of mind.[17]
>
> Surrounded by the others like the moon amidst the stars,[18] the king put Dhṛtarāṣṭra in the van and entered the city, his own city.[19] . . .
>
> Yudhiṣṭhira mounted a shining new chariot that was outfitted with woolen cloth and black antelope skins, and which was yoked to sixteen white, auspiciously marked cattle. It was as if the Moon were mounting his chariot made of the immortal nectar. The frightfully violent son of Kuntī, Bhīma, took the reins, and Arjuna held the radiant white parasol. The white parasol held over his head was like a white cloud in the sky; it shone like the king of the stars [the moon]. Then those two heroes, the sons of Mādrī, took up ornamented yak-tail fans that shimmered like the rays of the moon. All of them splendidly ornamented, the five brothers got on the chariot, and it seemed, king, as though the five elements had been massed together there. . . .[20]
>
> Being praised along the way by his well-spoken bards and poets— *vaitālikas, sūtas, māgadhas*— the strong-armed king went to the City of the Elephant in a procession that was without precedent upon the earth. The teeming throng of people full of joy then let loose.[21]
>
> Upon the son of Pṛthā's approach the men of the town fittingly decorated the city and the King's Way. . . . New water-tight pots full of water were positioned at the city gate, and charming girls and goats were stationed here and there. As they hailed him with sweet words of praise, the son of Pāṇḍu, surrounded by his friends, entered the city through that well-decorated gate.[22]
>
> In due course Yudhiṣṭhira passed on from the King's Way and approached the royal palace that had been decorated and now shone resplendently. The king's subjects, from the town and the country alike,

17. *MBh* 12.38.26–27ab, 28cd–29.
18. The Bharatas are descendants of Ilā, with whom the lunar dynasty begins. The solar dynasty begins with Ilā's brother Ikṣvāku. See Appendix 3, Chart 1.
19. *MBh* 12.38.30.
20. *MBh* 12.38.32–37. The five *(mahā-)bhūta-s,* the cosmic building blocks: Ether *(ākāśa)*, Wind *(vāyu)*, Fire *(agni, tejas,* etc.), Water *(udaka, jala,* etc.), and Earth *(pṛthivī)*. A simile demonstrating how the epic regularly connects different layers of a universe.
21. *MBh* 12.38.43–44.
22. *MBh* 12.38.45, 48–49.

> came up to him from this side and that and said things sweet to his ears. "O king of kings, crusher of your enemies, fortunately you are victorious over your enemies! Fortunately you have regained the kingdom with Lawful Deeds and Might. Great king, be our king here for a hundred years. Protect your subjects with Meritorious, Lawful Deeds, as Indra does heaven." Honored in this way at the palace gate by their good wishes, he received benedictions uttered by brahmins on every side. Having entered the palace—the like of the palace of the king of the Gods—and having listened to everything having to do with the victory, he descended from the chariot.[23]
>
> Yudhiṣṭhira went within and approached the Gods with splendid riches. He worshiped them all with jewels, fragrances, and garlands of flowers. The king then stepped out, possessed once again of Royal Splendor and great glory, and he gazed upon the handsome brahmins who awaited him. He was then surrounded by brahmins eager to pronounce benedictions upon him, and spotless he shone there radiantly, like the moon amid the multitude of stars. Then, after first honoring his house-priest, Dhaumya, and his eldest father (Dhṛtarāṣṭra), the son of Kuntī [Yudhiṣṭhira] honored those brahmins in the prescribed way with flowers and sweets, with jewels and much gold, and with cattle, clothing, and various other things they valued. Then, Bhārata, the sounds of their wishing the king an auspicious day grew to a roar and almost reached the sky. Those blessed sounds brought joy to the king's friends and were sweet in their ears. As those brahmins learned in the Vedas were bubbling with resonant sounds like honking geese, the Goddess Bhāratī [Sarasvatī, the Goddess of brahmin learning and wisdom], teeming with syllables, words, and the things expressed by words, was heard in their midst. Then the pleasing sounds of kettledrums and conch-shell horns proclaiming the victory were heard.[24]

Cārvāka's Sour Note

The perfect fullness and sweet harmony of the Pāṇḍava entry into the city were spoiled briefly by one loud, sour note. A Rākṣasa monster named Cārvāka was present among those enthusiastic brahmins,[25] disguised as one of them. Formerly a friend of Duryodhana's,

> that wicked man, without asking leave of those brahmins, spoke to the king, wishing evil on the exalted Pāṇḍava. "All these brahmins have

23. *MBh* 12.39.8–13.
24. *MBh* 12.39.14–21.
25. In later times a doctrine of philosophical materialism was attributed to one Cārvāka (see note 1 of this introduction).

> entrusted me to speak for them, and they say, 'Curses upon you, sir, a wicked king who slaughtered his own kin! What good can there be in your ruling the kingdom, son of Kuntī, since you have completely erased your own kinsmen? And once you had caused the killing of your elders, death would have been better for you than surviving.'"[26]

Yudhiṣṭhira was wounded by these cruel words, and he pleaded that the brahmins not curse him. But the brahmins, discerning the truth of the matter, were outraged and murderous. After assuring Yudhiṣṭhira, "This is not what we say! Royal Splendor be yours, prince,"[27]

> all those pure brahmins were insensate with rage as they repudiated that wicked Rākṣasa, and they killed him by chanting *"hum."* He fell, completely incinerated by the blazing brilliance of those who give utterance to the *brahman* [the Vedas], like a tree with all its shoots incinerated by a bolt of Great Indra's lightning.[28]

Yudhiṣṭhira's Consecration and Rule

This note of discord dispelled, Yudhiṣṭhira was then consecrated (*abhiṣikta*, "sprinkled") as king of the Bharatas by the Pāṇḍavas' house-priest, Dhaumya. Amidst continuing general jubilation, the newly consecrated king of the reunited Bhārata kingdom next took steps inaugurating his royal administration: He commanded reverence and obedience by all for Dhṛtarāṣṭra, designated Bhīma to be his successor, appointed various officers, performed the first monthly memorial rite for his dead kinsmen, and extended his royal protection to his subjects, particularly those who had no protectors (*anātha-s*, those without husbands and fathers, widows, orphans, and similar unfortunates).[29] Yudhiṣṭhira then adored Kṛṣṇa elaborately, reciting a litany of a century of his names, and in turn the incarnate form of Viṣṇu congratulated Yudhiṣṭhira once again. All turned in for the night after Yudhiṣṭhira reassigned the palaces of Duryodhana and his brothers to Bhīma and the other Pāṇḍavas. The strikingly bright and simple strain of devotion for Kṛṣṇa in Yudhiṣṭhira's litany reappears regularly in the narrative from this point on through its next segment (from 12.43 through 12.55). The next segment of the narrative establishes and launches the massive instruction in "Ideally Good Behavior" (dharma),[30] which constitutes the actual substance of *The Book*

26. *MBh* 12.39.25–27.
27. *MBh* 12.39.31cd.
28. *MBh* 12.39.35–36.
29. See the endnote on "helplessly" at 11.9.10.
30. I translate *dharma* here in this highly abstract way because I am referring to the two different varieties of dharma that are primary in the *MBh:* "Lawful, Meritorious Deed" and "Virtue" (see the discussion of this word later in this introduction and in Appendix 4). This translation seeks to represent their common denominator.

of Peace of the *MBh* and its follow-up companion (Book 13), styled rather minimally *The Book of Instructions.*

The Cooling of the King

The Danger in Cārvāka's Diatribe

Cārvāka's attack on Yudhiṣṭhira as "a wicked king who slaughtered his own kin," who would better have died in the war than survived, and his suggestion that there could be no good in Yudhiṣṭhira's ruling the kingdom were extremely painful to the new king precisely because he had condemned himself in this way just a short time before and had come to the same conclusion! When the time had come to enter the city victoriously, Yudhiṣṭhira had announced he was turning the kingship over to Arjuna and would himself go into the forest to live an ascetic and mystical life in order to expiate the evil he had done by waging the war, and to prevent his ever repeating such evil. Yudhiṣṭhira's sense of sorrow, guilt, and shame was so great, his conviction that the war had been wrong was so deep, he could not accept the fruit of these actions. And in the course of arguing over this decision with his family and the seers assembled on the bank of the Gaṅgā, Yudhiṣṭhira became so frustrated at one point that he even announced his intention to end his life by sitting and fasting *(prāya).*[31] Yudhiṣṭhira burned with grief *(śoka)* because of his actions as king,[32] and the principle issue the text raises here is the dilemma of a good man recoiling from acts that are an inherent part of ruling as a king. The authors of the *Mahābhārata* represent Yudhiṣṭhira's *śoka* as an alarming problem, and the response to it was swift and decisive: It was unacceptable. Yudhiṣṭhira could not be allowed to walk away from the responsibilities of kingship because of the violence inherent in them. Yudhiṣṭhira's position is exactly the same as that which Cārvāka will soon voice in the city, and it is a noxious and dangerous "Naysaying" *(nāstika)* position.[33] But while Cārvāka is simply a monster disguised as a brahmin and can be swiftly and

31. *MBh* 27.22–25.

32. Yudhiṣṭhira had already been the king of Indraprastha, and he also had some claim to be king of the Bharatas as the firstborn of Pāṇḍu. Of course, Dhṛtarāṣṭra had become "king" of the Bharatas when Pāṇḍu retired to the forest, and then his son Duryodhana became a "king" too when he came of age. The curiosity that Duryodhana is often styled *rājan* while his father Dhṛtarāṣṭra, who is typically styled *rājan*, is still alive, or—to put it more generally—the fact that the usage of the *MBh* tolerates a plurality of *rājans* within a lineage, would seem to reflect in some measure the ancient use of *rājan* as the name of the "temporary leader chosen to lead a raid or to defend the tribe against other raiders" (Scharfe, *The State in Indian Tradition*, 230; see also Scharfe, "Sacred Kingship, Warlords, and Nobility": 311–14). It is worth bearing in mind in this connection, that the fission *(bheda)* within the Bhārata clan between the Dhārtarāṣṭras and the Pāṇḍavas is not represented in the text as simply a struggle for unique possession of ruling power.

33. See note 1 at the beginning of this introduction.

easily dispatched by the weapon appropriate to brahmins, Yudhiṣṭhira presents a far deeper and more serious problem. He is a good man and king who has waged a war, and, successful in his efforts, he is not able to escape or ignore what his success in the war has cost.

The Buildup of *Śoka* in the Wake of the War

One aspect of Yudhiṣṭhira's representing dharma in the epic narrative[34] is a certain tendermindedness on his part that corresponds to the younger, Virtue-based senses of the idea of dharma.[35] As we shall see later, though, Yudhiṣṭhira's *śoka* is not merely personal tendermindedness. While Bhīma relished the war with lusty glee, and Arjuna generally fought with a clear-eyed fury, Yudhiṣṭhira is characterized by an interesting complexity.[36] He approached the war with alternating reluctance and craftiness, or dishonesty, and he is frequently associated with encounters that turn upon falsehood or confusions of identity.[37] During the buildup to the war described in *The Book of the Effort*, Yudhiṣṭhira craftily suborned Śalya's demoralizing of Karṇa at the time when Karṇa and Arjuna would meet in their ultimate death match (in which Śalya was bound to serve as Karṇa's charioteer),[38] but then he generously offered to make peace with Duryodhana for a mere five villages in lieu of the entire Indraprastha half of the kingdom![39] As noted earlier,[40] Yudhiṣṭhira piously took leave of his elders on the enemy side of the field when all the troops were lined up in opposition, just before hostilities began. This scrupulosity put Yudhiṣṭhira's honesty and reliability in the foreground. It also elicited expressions of conflicted loyalties on the part of his elders. The painful promises which Yudhiṣṭhira and his elders made at this time reflect identities and loyalties twisted all out of normal shape, and Bhīṣma's bizarre pledge regarding his death and its subsequent fulfillment are disturbing. (So too are the actual

34. Which he does by virtue of the fact that his physical father was the God Dharma; see *MBh* 1.113–114, van Buitenen, 1: 254–55.

35. See the discussion below in "Newer Senses of Dharma" under "Dharma Conflicted and Dharma Contested."

36. Several times in his introductory text, *Hinduism*, R. C. Zaehner focused on Yudhiṣṭhira and the agony he experienced as he fulfilled the obligations of warrior and king while fully informed by values of dharma deriving from the discourse of yoga, paramount among which is *ahiṃsā*, "harmlessness" (see especially 115 ff.). In my opinion, however, Zaehner's view of Yudhiṣṭhira overemphasizes the personal point of view and unabashedly idealizes the noble side of Yudhiṣṭhira's character while dismissing too hastily its darker side.

37. For a comprehensive and insightful discussion of Yudhiṣṭhira's sins in the war, see Chapters 9 and 10 of Hiltebeitel, *The Ritual of Battle*, 229–86.

38. *MBh* 5.8.25 ff.; van Buitenen, 3: 199–200. The perfidy of this deed has been eclipsed in discussions of Yudhiṣṭhira by his lie to Droṇa on the fifteenth day of the war. Zaehner explains that lie as something Yudhiṣṭhira did under divine compulsion (Kṛṣṇa's command), but he ignores this even more insidious conspiracy, which was cooly planned ahead of time.

39. *MBh* 5.31.18–23; van Buitenen, 3: 250–51.

40. See "What Happened in the War" in the general introduction to this volume.

details of the plan Bhīṣma reveals for his grandsons to bring him down, because they turned upon the thoroughly confused identity of Ambā, who had become Śikhaṇḍinī and then Śikhaṇḍin.[41]) Then, on the fifteenth day of the war, Yudhiṣṭhira surpassed his duplicity with Śalya by lying outright to Droṇa, again for the purpose of demoralizing a leading Kaurava warrior.[42] On the seventeenth day, after Yudhiṣṭhira was severely wounded by Karṇa and as he lay recuperating on his bed, Arjuna attacked Yudhiṣṭhira to kill him after Yudhiṣṭhira accused Arjuna of having retreated from Karṇa in cowardice.[43] After Kṛṣṇa had restrained Arjuna, Arjuna berated Yudhiṣṭhira for his regular aloof criticisms and his comparatively tepid fighting while others fought bravely and sacrificed much on Yudhiṣṭhira's account.[44] Grievously pained, Yudhiṣṭhira moved to make Bhīma the king and leave for the forest right then and there,[45] but Kṛṣṇa patched things up. Yudhiṣṭhira recovered from his wounds sufficiently to kill his traitorous coconspirator Śalya by the middle of the next day, the eighteenth and final day of the battle, but later that afternoon, when complete victory was virtually in his grasp (after the Pāṇḍavas had routed the Kaurava army on the afternoon of the eighteenth day and had Duryodhana surrounded as he hid all alone in the waters of a lake), Yudhiṣṭhira agreed with Duryodhana to let the result of the entire war hinge on the outcome of a duel between Duryodhana and any one of the Pāṇḍavas![46]

As hard as the eighteen days of the war were on Yudhiṣṭhira, the eighteenth night and the period immediately after the war were worse. As soon as Bhīma fells Duryodhana with a low blow in their club duel, the dominant theme of Vyāsa's narrative becomes burning grief *(śoka)*. Against a foil of Pāṇḍava jubilation and satisfaction (shared some even by Yudhiṣṭhira at its outset),[47] Vyāsa's story now moves from one distressing episode animated by *śoka* to another, and it culminates with a much more serious wish by Yudhiṣṭhira to withdraw than he had had on the seventeenth day of battle. The shame Yudhiṣṭhira felt after Arjuna's tongue-lashing then grew to profound remorse and despair thirty days after the war.

On the afternoon of the eighteenth day, when Bhīma smashed Duryodhana's thigh with an unfairly low blow in their club duel and then put his foot on the broken Duryodhana's head, the earth groaned, and bitter recriminations and harsh words erupted among the leaders of the

41. For a brief explanation of this matter, see the LCP ss.vv. "Śikhaṇḍin" and "Bhīṣma."
42. *MBh* 7.164.71–74 and 97–110.
43. See *MBh* 8.45.50–49.13. Arjuna had temporarily withdrawn from the battle because Kṛṣṇa had directed him to find Yudhiṣṭhira and check on his condition.
44. *MBh* 8.49.14–87. 45. *MBh* 8.49.101–6. 46. *MBh* 9.31.25.
47. See *MBh* 9.61.26–30 and 62.15–21.

Pāṇḍava party.[48] Soon after this, Yudhiṣṭhira hurried Kṛṣṇa Vāsudeva off to Hāstinapura to neutralize, with the help of Vyāsa, the *śoka* of Gāndhārī, which he feared would generate a powerful curse because of the foul way her firstborn son had been felled.[49] Duryodhana, lying on the ground in his broken body, survived for twelve hours after this duel, and transmitted some of his rage and bitterness to Aśvatthāman, thus augmenting that one's rage and bitterness over the "crooked" killing of his father Droṇa.[50] Aśvatthāman's horrendous nighttime raid upon the sleeping Pāṇḍava camp, his throttling and beating Dhṛṣṭadyumna to death in his bed, and his killing of Draupadī's brother Śikhaṇḍin and her five sons by the five Pāṇḍavas profoundly shocked and grieved Draupadī and the Pāṇḍavas.[51] Yudhiṣṭhira fainted when Dhṛṣṭadyumna's charioteer informed him of the killings, and when he revived, he lamented with wavering voice:

> We who had won have now been defeated, and the others, who had been defeated have now won. Having killed our brothers and companions, fathers, sons, lots of our friends, kinsmen, counselors, and grandsons; having conquered them all, *we* have now been defeated. . . . If someone is victorious but then grieves like a poor afflicted imbecile, how can he think of it as victory? In fact his enemies have defeated him worse than he did them.[52]

Yudhiṣṭhira imagined the pain Draupadī would feel, and he sent Nakula to fetch her from Upaplavya.[53] In the meantime, he went to the site of the slaughter, where he fainted once again. When he revived, "tremendous grief overcame him" as he contemplated the bloody spectacle.[54] Draupadī arrived at the scene, and she too sank to the ground. When revived by her most reliable protector, Bhīmasena, she abused Yudhiṣṭhira with harsh sarcasm, suggesting that he had lightly sacrificed the lives of the next generation to gain sway over the earth.[55] Exclaiming, "When I heard that Droṇa's son did the wicked deed of killing them as they slept, hot grief burned me up, son of Pṛthā, like a fire burns up its fuel,"[56] Draupadī demanded Aśvatthāman's life and swore she would fast to death (*prāya* once again) if the son of Droṇa did not get the just deserts of his heinous act.[57] While Yudhiṣṭhira worried about the details of her vow, Draupadī sent Bhīma to do the job. And Bhīma flew after Aśvatthāman, setting up the final desperate act of the war, which was Aśvatthāman's directing

48. See *MBh* 9.58–60.
49. *MBh* 9.61.38–9.62.
50. *MBh* 9.64. Chapter 9.63 is full of bitter lamentation by Duryodhana. The Pāṇḍavas' killings of Droṇa, Karṇa, Duryodhana, and others were accomplished by way of "crooked means," *jihmopāyas*, says Duryodhana at 9.60.29.
51. *MBh* 10.8. 52. *MBh* 10.10.10cd–11, 13 53. See the LCP.
54. *MBh* 10.10.24–11.2. 55. *MBh* 10.11.4–12. 56. *MBh* 10.11.13.
57. *MBh* 10.11.14–15.

his magical *brahman*-head arrow to eliminate the Pāṇḍavas' only remaining heir.[58]

We have already seen and discussed Vyāsa's continuation of this tale of anguish and sorrow *(śoka)* in *The Book of the Women.* And we have seen how, at the very end of that book, Kuntī's *śoka*-driven revelation of Karṇa's identity astounded Yudhiṣṭhira and fired his *śoka* past his breaking point. Book 12 commences one month after this revelation, but the fire of *śoka* still burned within Yudhiṣṭhira and provided the impetus for his resolving to renounce the Bhārata kingship.

Yudhiṣṭhira's Vow to Withdraw

The first words out of Yudhiṣṭhira's mouth in Book 12 run straight to the matter of Karṇa's killing:

> I have conquered this whole earth by relying on the strength of Kṛṣṇa's arms, the favor of the brahmins, and the strength of Bhīma and Arjuna. But ever since finishing this tremendous extermination of my kinsmen, which was ultimately caused by my greed, a terrible pain aches in my heart without stopping. I caused the slaughter of Subhadrā's son [Abhimanyu] and Draupadī's dear sons. So, blessed one [the seer Nārada], this victory looks more like defeat to me.[59] . . . And there is something else I will tell you, blessed Nārada. I have been burdened with sorrow by my mother Kuntī, who kept this secret to herself.[60]
>
> That one with the might of a myriad elephants, who had no equal in the world as a chariot warrior, who swayed like a lion when he walked; that one who was wise, warm, self-controlled, and firm in his resolves; that one who was the proud anchor of the Dhārtarāṣṭras; the intensely aggressive, unforgiving, constantly furious one who hurled swift shots at us in battle after battle; an expert in different kinds of fighting who was wonderfully courageous—Kuntī told us, when we were pouring the funeral libations, that he was her son born in secret, fathered by the Sun! He was our brother born of the same womb! Cast upon the waters long ago, though he was born with all good features, the one everyone knew as the son of a *sūta* and his wife Rādhā—he was Kuntī's eldest son! Our brother! The son of our mother! Unaware of this, I caused his death in war because I craved the kingdom. This burns every limb of my body like fire racing through a pile of straw.[61]
>
> My heart burns furiously because I caused my brother to be killed.

58. *MBh* 10.12–16. Arjuna's grandson and Abhimanyu's son, Parikṣit, who was still in the womb of his mother, Uttarā, was killed by this missile but was revived by Kṛṣṇa when he was later born dead. Parikṣit was born dead at 14.65.8–9 and revived by Kṛṣṇa at 14.68.23–24.

59. *MBh* 12.1.13–15. 60. *MBh* 12.1.18. 61. *MBh* 12.1.19–24.

> With Karṇa and Arjuna beside me I could have conquered even Vāsava [Indra]![62]

And, after asking for and learning the story of Karṇa's doom, Yudhiṣṭhira, the son of Dharma, he for whom the issue of truth and falsity is constitutive,[63] cursed women everywhere to be unable to keep secrets, because his mother had kept Karṇa's true identity secret with such painful consequences.

> [T]he King of Law's eyes filled with tears. His mind addled with grief, he made this pronouncement because of his devotion to Law: "I am severely pained now because you, good lady, kept this information secret." Tormented too much, that one blazing with energy cursed women everywhere: "They will not keep secrets."
>
> The king's heart was troubled as he recalled sons and grandsons, friends and kinsmen. His mind was deranged. Then, tormented with regrets, his soul immersed in grief like a fire choked with smoke, the wise king despaired.[64]

Yudhiṣṭhira then raved about the consequences of the war. He meandered from a general condemnation of the kṣatriya ethos to a moving meditation on the disappointment of parents over the death of young men in war; from there to excusing himself and his brothers for responsibility—with finger-pointing at Duryodhana instead—and then to praise of the transcendent goodness of the ascetic and mystic life one can pursue in the wilderness.[65] His concluding comment provoked a crisis that is much larger than this one man's state of mind, or even his own general well-being in this world and the next: "The heroes are dead. The evil is done. Our kingdom has been laid waste. Having killed them, our rage is gone. Now this grief holds me in check."[66]

"This grief holds me in check," *śoko māṃ rundhayaty ayam:* Yudhiṣṭhira's sense of sorrow and despair now prevented him from completing what he had started. All of Yudhiṣṭhira's punctilious observance of dharma, all of his predilections for honesty, integrity, and peace, had failed to stay his hand from war; but now he refused to own the results of that war!

> Dhanaṃjaya (Arjuna), evil one has done is struck off by goodness. Holy Learning says, "One who has renounced everything is not able to do evil again." Holy Learning says, "One who has renounced everything and who, once he is on the way, stays resolute, does not suffer birth and death; he attains to perfection as *brahman.*" He becomes a hermit

62. *MBh* 12.1.38.

63. The mother's lie and the son's curse are additional matters pertaining to the fundamental ambivalence of Yudhiṣṭhira's character. See note 37 above, and the discussion of the ambivalence of dharma below.

64. *MBh* 12.6.9cd–12. 65. *MBh* 12.7.1–32. 66. *MBh* 12.7.33.

suffused with Knowledge, Dhanaṃjaya, and he no longer lives between the pairs of opposites. I am going to say good-bye to all of you and go to the forest. Holy Learning says, "One who has possessions is not able to reach the Law that is most complete,"[67] and that is obvious to me, O destroyer of your enemies. I committed evil as I sought possessions. Holy Learning says, "It is possible to reach the underlying cause of birth and death." So I am discarding my possessions and the entire kingdom, and I am leaving—completely free, free of grief and free of bother too! You rule this wide earth which is now at rest; the thorn has been removed from it. The kingdom and the enjoyment of it are no affair of mine, O best of the Kurus.[68]

The Persuasion of Yudhiṣṭhira

Yudhiṣṭhira's brothers and Draupadī reacted to this statement with astonishment and anger, and there now raged a debate reminiscent of the famous debate at the beginning of their time in the forest.[69] His family did not much feel their brother's sense of anguish, and they were determined to lead him to the right understanding this time. Arjuna led the charge against Yudhiṣṭhira's decision with counterattacks on his elder's glorification of poverty and asceticism. He defended the possession of riches, and he defended the violent expropriation by kings of the land and riches of their neighbors, defending as well their maintenance of social order by violence.[70] He, his three brothers, and Draupadī sustained a heated, sometimes scathingly insulting, sometimes learned and sophisticated argument over these and important collateral ethical issues. Though not entirely unmoved by their vehemence, Yudhiṣṭhira stubbornly held his ground against their arguments, repeated different points grounded in the philosophy of yoga, and continued to insist upon withdrawing to the forest.

As the argument continued, the seer Devasthāna spoke up against Yudhiṣṭhira's position. He was followed by Vyāsa, who insisted upon a

67. *kṛtsnatamo dharmaḥ*, 12.7.37a.
68. *MBh* 12.7.34–40.
69. *MBh* 3.28–37; see van Buitenen, 3: 274–95. The family debate here spans Chapters 12.7–19, and then the seers Devasthāna, Vyāsa, and Nārada join Arjuna's position, followed eventually by Kṛṣṇa Vāsudeva. This second phase of the debate spans Chapters 12.20–38). I have labeled this whole section of *The Laws for Kings* "The Persuasion of Yudhiṣṭhira," dividing it into two portions (Part 1: "The Family," and Part 2: "The Seers and Kṛṣṇa Vāsudeva"). *Śāntiparvan* 84b and 84c.
70. Arjuna made these arguments chiefly in Chapters 12.8, 15, and 22. In Chapters 12.11 and 18 he quotes older texts attacking the ascetic way of life in general and praising the responsible, active life of householders and kings. Chapter 12.18 is particularly interesting, as it quotes a diatribe—a diatribe addressed to him by his wife!—directed against Janaka, the king famous elsewhere in the *MBh* for combining kingship and the ethics of yoga.

sharp distinction between brahmin and kṣatriya ideals as he praised kingship and householding generally. As Yudhiṣṭhira still resisted, Vyāsa explained that extra-human forces, particularly Time, were the ultimate cause of events, but Yudhiṣṭhira continued to insist upon his personal responsibility, and then he vowed to sit and fast to death in *praya*.[71] Vyāsa scoffed at this threat and repeated his argument that Yudhiṣṭhira's proper actions in the war were not the ultimate cause of all these sorrows.[72] At this point Arjuna asked Kṛṣṇa Vāsudeva to deal with Yudhiṣṭhira, and the Yādava prince added his voice to the chorus against Yudhiṣṭhira's grief. He told Yudhiṣṭhira "The Tale of Sixteen Great Kings" who were all dead and gone in spite of glorious and noble deeds, a recital which the seer Nārada had made to a patron, King Sṛñjaya, when that king's own special son had been killed by a jealous Indra. After repeating some of the remarkable details of this story at Kṛṣṇa's suggestion,[73] Nārada too urged Yudhiṣṭhira to accept the kingship. Perhaps for the first time in the entire epic, Yudhiṣṭhira was now in his own element, arguing matters of the highest Law not just with his brothers and wife, whom he regarded as undereducated,[74] but with the seers whom he admired so much.[75] His admiration and respect for these seers, however, did not make him easily amenable to their arguments! He persisted, asking Vyāsa to tell him about good *āśramas* (ascetic retreats in the wilderness). Vyāsa responded with further stern analyses of the responsibility for the blood shed in the Bhārata war and advised Yudhiṣṭhira that Good Action (dharma) sometimes looks like Wrong Action (adharma). Conceding a little ground to Yudhiṣṭhira's sense of guilt, Vyāsa counseled the king to perform expiation with a Horse Sacrifice. This concession turned Yudhiṣṭhira's mind, and after eliciting from Vyāsa a general treatment of the subject of expiation *(prāyaścitta)* and some related matters from the Learned Traditions of Law, Yudhiṣṭhira asked how kingship and Law could truly be reconciled.

Having terrified all with his repudiation of the Bhārata war, Yudhiṣṭhira

71. This striking vow occurs at 12.27.22–25.
72. Vyāsa's treatment of excessive grief here—both his manner and his arguments—strongly resembles his earlier treatment of Dhṛtarāṣṭra at *MBh* 11.8.
73. The curious story of Nārada's stay with King Sṛñjaya, his giving him a remarkable son (Svarṇaṣṭhīvin, "he who excreted gold," an accurate name), who would rival Indra, and his revival of the boy after Indra killed him contains some interesting parallel elements to the *MBh* narrative as a whole. Most relevant at this juncture of the story, of course, is the motif of the revival of the glorious royal scion by an eminent Vaiṣṇava figure (Nārada, who was the source of the boy in the first place) after his slaying by a wayward representative of the *kṣatra* (Indra). This prefigures the coming revival of Parikṣit by Kṛṣṇa Vāsudeva (Parikṣit is born dead in 14.65 and Kṛṣṇa revives him in 14.68), and, from the point of view of the governing myth of the *MBh*, this entire effort to persuade Yudhiṣṭhira to reverse his vow to withdraw to the forest and become king is something of a parallel to both these revivals.
74. Yudhiṣṭhira says things to this effect in 12.19.
75. Yudhiṣṭhira frequently testifies to his having attended upon elders and wise and learned men, and in the epic he is often shown being instructed by sages. But here, remarkably, he is shown disputing with them rather than simply acquiescing to their guidance.

had relented and had been drawn back into his proper role of king. Vyāsa praised Bhīṣma's knowledge and encouraged Yudhiṣṭhira to approach the grandfather, still alive on a "hero's bed" on the battlefield, with his doubts, and then Kṛṣṇa spoke the final words that launched him forward:

> You really should not be obsessed with grief right now! Best of kings, do what the blessed Vyāsa has just said! O strong-armed great king, the brahmins and your mighty brothers wait upon you expectantly, the way those afflicted by summer's heat await Parjanya, the God of rain. And the kings who escaped being killed, and the whole assembly of the four Orders, and your country, the Country of Kuru, do too. Do it in order to please these exalted brahmins, and do it because your teacher, Vyāsa of immeasurable brilliance, has commanded it. Do a favor for your friends [allies such as Kṛṣṇa's tribe, the Yādavas, and Vṛṣṇis] and for Draupadī. You who have slain your enemies, do what is good for the world![76]

At this point Yudhiṣṭhira relented, entered Hāstinapura, and inaugurated his rule over the reunited Bhārata kingdom. But, as he had told Vyāsa before he gave in, the conflict Yudhiṣṭhira saw between kingly rule and dharma as he understood it had not really been resolved. So, repeating the advice Vyāsa gave the king outside the city, Kṛṣṇa counseled Yudhiṣṭhira to go to Bhīṣma, who lay upon the hero's bed of arrows near where he fell on the battlefield on the tenth day of the war.[77] With Kṛṣṇa's assistance, Yudhiṣṭhira and Bhīṣma were then brought together so that the fading old pseudo-patriarch could dispense a body of teaching that would serve for millennia.[78] What follows in the remaining 298 chapters of Book 12 and the first 152 chapters of Book 13 (that is, across all but the final two chapters of that latter book) are the four anthologies of instruction. Hans van Buitenen suggested that Bhīṣma's instruction of Yudhiṣṭhira before dying at the solstice "must be the longest deathbed sermon on record," and since it stretches more than 37,900 lines of text in 450 chapters (a length on the order of magnitude of the entire Bible), it would be hard to dispute this somewhat unsympathetic conjecture.[79] We should note, however, that the *Mahābhārata* claims that this awesome feat of teaching was made possible only because Kṛṣṇa relieved Bhīṣma of the pain of his wounds and transferred to Bhīṣma the learning of his own mind.[80]

76. *MBh* 12.38.21–25.
77. He was waiting there for his chosen moment of death, the winter solstice, for the sun's annual turn to the north was a particularly auspicious moment of the year.
78. See *MBh* 12.46.20–23, 50.30–36, 51.17–18, and 52.1–26.
79. See van Buitenen, 1: xxiii.
80. Bhīṣma does, however, claim his own authority for some of the items he subsequently teaches Yudhiṣṭhira, which suggests that text's enlisting of Kṛṣṇa's authority for Bhīṣma's instructions reflects a relatively later stratum of editing or rewriting. The question of the history of the *Mahābhārata* is one of the great puzzles that lies before intellectual and literary historians. In a work like this, however, that diachronic question must be superceded by an attempt to read the whole received text in as thoroughly synchronic a way as possible. I occasionally remark upon issues of the text's history, but for now my main interest is to offer the text we have as sympathetic a reading as possible.

Śānti: Śoka-praśamana

When he vowed to withdraw into the forest, Yudhiṣṭhira was in a state known to occur frequently in various elements of the ancient Vedic ritual sacrifice—he was dangerously overheated—and Kṛṣṇa and the seers dealt with him the way priests had dealt with overheated objects for centuries: They cooled him down. The repertoire of the Vedic priests had many ritual formulas and gestures to deal with overheated elements of the ritual. The cooling process was called *praśamana*, and ritual processes and gestures aiming at one kind of *praśamana* or another were called *śānti-s*. D. J. Hoens carried out a study of the ritual representations of *praśamana* and *śānti* in Vedic ritual literature that lays a foundation for understanding *śānti-s* in general.[81] This understanding allows me to interpret the whole of Bhīṣma's instruction of Yudhiṣṭhira as a grand *śānti* of the newly inaugurated king, one intended to bring his disabling inner heat to rest and allow him to rule. The idea I see at work here is that a king who is too profoundly disturbed after warfare to rule threatens to leave a dangerous vacuum in government: Either the victorious ruler may abdicate his power, as Yudhiṣṭhira proposed to do, or he may refuse to use warfare (and perhaps judicial violence as well) to acquire the legitimate goods of his kingdom (the wealth of his weaker neighbors and peace and proper order within his own realm).

The word *śoka* is part of an old and important complex of ideas that plays a role in the Vedic fire ritual. Deriving from the verbal root √*śuc, śocati*, "blaze, burn brightly," the word frequently was used in the old ritual texts to describe something that was burning too hot, something that, by its excess of heat, was threatening the normal progress of the rite. The usual method of dealing with such a problem was "to bring to rest" the overheated object, and this "bringing to rest" was typically expressed with a word expressing another ancient and even more widespread complex of ideas, namely, verbs and nouns from the root √*śam*.[82] (Some

81. D. J. Hoens, *Śānti: A Contribution to Ancient Indian Religious Terminology*.
82. See Mayrhofer, *EWA*, s.v. "***ŚAM¹***." There is a complicated array of words in Old Indian literature that led some scholars in the past to postulate more than one root behind all the occurring forms (the Petersburg Dictionary listed four separate roots √*śam*). Mayrhofer agrees with Paul Thieme, who argued almost fifty years ago, in a review of Hoens's *Śānti* (*Oriens* 6, no. 1 [June 1953]: 401), that Old Indian knew only one root √*śam* and that this root expressed the meanings "'Ermatten,' 'zur Ruhe Kommen,' 'Erlöschen,'" that is, "grow weary, weak, or become exhausted"; "come to rest"; and, of fire, "go out, cease to burn." H. W. Bailey took a broader linguistic view of the history of the word and came to the same conclusion regarding the number of roots. Bailey proposed a different history of the root's semantic development, however, arguing that the root initially meant "to fit, suit, agree, accord" ("A Problem of the Indo-Iranian Vocabulary," *Rocznik Orientalistyczny* 21 [1957]: 62). Louis Renou accepted Thieme's conclusions, though with some later vacillations (for his initial acceptance, see *EVP* 3: 54; 4: 43, 65, 119; but then see 7: 36, 72, 76; 12: 104–5; 13:

scholars have made the apparently plausible proposal to connect the indeclinable Vedic word *śám*, "Blessings!" "Well-being to . . . !" to this root, but there are complications, and Mayrhofer regards *śám* as "hard to judge" etymologically[83]) The typical methods for bringing overheated ritual elements to rest involved the use of water or words (that is, *mantras*), or both.

In the *AV*, as well as in the several *Saṃhitās* of the *Yajur Veda*, and in the class of Vedic texts that explicate the sacrificial ritual, the Brāhmaṇas, causative forms of √*śam (śamaya-)* occur to describe someone, usually a priest, bringing some thing or process to rest. This action is often designated by the noun *śānti*, while that which has been brought to rest can be designated by the past participle *śānta;* something which is still strong and active is *a-śānta* ("not *śānta*"). This bringing-to-rest is, in these texts, almost always associated with inimical power on the part of that thing or process which is the object of the causative verb, because these things are conceived of as capable of injuring the sacrifice itself, its sponsor *(yajamana)*, his family, property, or interests, or creatures in general. The types of things which the Brāhmaṇas direct the priests to bring to rest are diverse. In a number of different connections fire (the God Agni), things which are hot or heating up, and the infrapersonal heating of anger are the objects of *śānti* in almost half of the cases encountered in the Vedic ritual texts.[84] Anything, however, which may be conceived of as building up an active power or feeling that could be maleficent is subject to *śānti*.[85]

37–38). This root and its derivatives had a long life in Sanskrit literature. From the hymns of the *Ṛg Veda Saṃhitā* onward, these words were standard items of general Sanskrit expression, and this complex gave rise to several important themes of Indian religion and culture, such as the theme of *śānti* we are discussing here.

83. See *EWA*, s.v. "***śám.***"

84. Such things were the objects of *śānti* in 231 of 475 instances, according to a survey of the primary Vedic texts and the *śrautasūtras* by Hoens in *Śānti* (177–87). See also *HDhŚ* 5: 719–35.

85. The ground must occasionally be "pacified" or "soothed." A particular, tiny portion of the sacrificial cake at the New and Full Moon Sacrifice, the *prāśitra*, represents anything that may have been injured, or wounded in the sacrifice, that is, anything that has been hurt by a ritual mistake, and it must be made *śānta* before the priest known as the Brahman (related to, but not the same word as, the anglicized *varṇa* name "brahmin") can consume it, for it will harm him if he eats it while it is still *aśānta*. Spades used in preparing the sacrificial area may be made *śānta*, for the spade is metaphorically conceived as a thunderbolt (Hoens, *Śānti*, 86); a tuft of grass (*prastara*), which has different practical and symbolic significances, must sometimes be made *śānta* (16), along with the sacrificial cake at the New and Full Moon sacrifice (3). The idea that a thing may have suffered injury (*krūra*), or represent some part of the sacrifice which has somehow been injured, is recurrent in these cases—the *prāśitra*, the earth when the ritual work area (or "altar," *vedi*) is excavated, the grain of the cake when it is threshed and ground, the grass tuft when it accidentally falls apart. In these cases, *śānti* is done to "soothe" or "heal" the injured thing, to "quell" its pain. When an animal is being sacrificed, before it is slaughtered, one of the priests sprinkles all the apertures of the animal's body with water. As the *TS* (at 6.3.9.1) explains, "When the beast is slaughtered, burning pain (*śuc*) comes over his vital breaths; (the priest) says, 'Let your voice swell, let your vital breaths swell'; thus does he extinguish (*śamayati*) the burning pain from its vital breaths" (see Hoens, *Śānti*, 50).

A *śānti* is the neutralization of such power, the bringing of it back to the zero point, the bringing of that force within the range of safety for the people who must deal with it. Other than Agni, the God who most often requires "bringing-to-rest" is Rudra, who is, in these texts, generally held to be maleficent.[86] Other Gods too must occasionally be made *śānta*—the Maruts, Soma and Varuṇa, and Soma and water. The typical means of *śānti* are the utterance of *śānta* words—appropriate mantras, *sāmans*, or *japa*[87]—and libations of water.[88]

Beginning with various appendices and manuals specifying proper ritual and general behavior that grew up as part of the Vedic tradition, and continuing on in the long and broad tradition of Dharmaśāstra, the word *śānti* is used as the generic name for a host of large and small apotropaic rituals. In the words of P. V. Kane, the subject of *śāntis* directed against

> all sorts of omens and portents was very much elaborated in the post-Vedic literature. An extensive literature of *śāntis* exists in the Gṛhyasūtras, the Kauśika-sūtra, the Atharvaveda Pariśiṣṭas, . . . the Purāṇas, . . . the Bṛhatsaṃhitā chap. 45, the Śāntika-pauṣṭika-kāṇḍa of Kṛtyakalpataru, . . . the Adbhutasagara of Ballālasena and his son Lakṣmaṇasena, . . . the *Śānti* section of the Madanaratna, . . . Jyotistattva of Raghunandana, . . . the Śāntikamalākara of Kamalakārabhaṭṭa, . . . [and the] Śāntimayūkha of Nīlakaṇṭha. . . . Many of the *śāntis* described [in these] and in the older śrauta and other works have been almost obsolete for a long time.[89]

In an ensuing enumeration, Kane states that *śāntis* are prescribed for conjuring away the effects of rare natural phenomena such as eclipses, earthquakes, rainfall (of peculiar kinds, of blood, etc.), hurricanes, fall of meteors, comets, halos, Fata Morgana; for protection against the evil effects of the positions and movements of planets and stars for the world and for individuals; for strange births among human beings and animals; for the good of horses and elephants; for certain untoward happenings about Indra's banner and about images of gods falling or weeping, the cries of birds and beasts, the fall of lizards and the like on a person's limbs; and on certain stated periods or on solemn occasions.[90]

I am not aware there was ever a *śānti* for neutralizing the effects of war, but the *Āśvalāyana Gṛhyasūtra*[91] does record a *śānti* with two broad similarities to the situation following the Bhārata war. It is a household *śānti* which is to be performed on the new-moon day following the death of a senior member of the family, and a significant part of the ritual is not only verbal in nature, but makes use of extended accounts, narratives, as

86. See A. A. Macdonell, *Vedic Mythology*, 74–77. For examples, see Hoens *Śānti*, 35–36.
87. See Hoens, *Śānti*, 46, 86, 179; and *HDhŚ* 5: 726–27.
88. See Hoens, *Śānti*, 177–84; and *HDhŚ* 5: 727.
89. *HDhŚ*, 5: 734–35.
90. *HDhŚ*, 5: 757.
91. *Āśvalāyana Gṛhyasūtra*, 4.6.1–19.

does *The Book of Peace,* the *Śāntiparvan.* This part of the ritual consists of the bereaved family passing an evening (and probably the still hours of the night before dawn) together, retelling stories of the family's elders and having auspicious Purāṇas and Itihāsas recited to them. This *śānti* is not explicitly directed against *śoka* (in fact, the *sūtra* adds that the rite can also be used against other, unspecified, calamities befalling a household), and the renewal of the household ritual fire appears to be the main concern of the rite. But the manner in which auspicious narratives, spread across a specially demarcated time, are used to still anxiety and grief is interestingly similar to the *śānti* of the *Mahābhārata.*

The *Praśamana-anuśāsana* of the King

The *śānti* of the *Śāntiparvan* is basically an apotropaic *śānti* that functions first of all to render Yudhiṣṭhira, the king, fit to rule.[92] As is usual with the *Mahābhārata,* however, the argument of the text has more threads, and they are woven together meaningfully. The cooling of the king is matched by a parallel dying out of the fire in Bhīṣma across the weeks of the instruction.[93] In the war Bhīṣma had burned like a blazing hot, smokeless fire; his arrows were flames that burned up some of the Pāṇḍavas' allies as if they were "forests burned by fire at the end of the cool season"; he had given off heat "like the noonday sun," and the Pāṇḍavas could not look at him because of his fiery energy *(tejas).*[94] At one point in the first ten days of the war, Yudhiṣṭhira had said to Kṛṣṇa, "Look at that great archer Bhīṣma, who is so ferociously aggressive! He burns my army up with his arrows the way fire burns dead trees in the summer. How can we even look upon this great man, who constantly licks at my troops with the fiery tongues of his arrows, who is like a fire that has received a sacrificial cake."[95] Now this incarnation of the ancient God Sky (Dyaus), whose whole human birth

92. We also find *śānti* as a theme of yoga, where it refers to the practitioner's "coming to rest" internally, mentally, spiritually; the achievement of a state of inner calm, quiet, or tranquility in which the strong feelings, temptations, and impulses to act that form a fundamental stratum of human experience have been significantly reduced or eliminated. Bringing Yudhiṣṭhira's *śoka* to rest is indeed a *śānti* of this sort, but the primary perspective of *The Book of Peace* is not that of Yudhiṣṭhira's welfare and interests, but those of the other Pāṇḍavas, the Bhārata kingdom, and the world as a whole (the interests of which are represented by the assembled seers). The *śānti* of Yudhiṣṭhira's *śoka* was necessary for the establishment of a sound and reliable kingly government. Yudhiṣṭhira's *śoka* was an obstacle that threatened to undermine the Pāṇḍava victory and impeded the restoration of the right principles of society and polity which that victory established—thus his *śoka* must be stilled, made *śānta.* The apotropaic elements of *The Book of Peace* predominate over the personally therapeutic.

93. Bhīṣma's patronymic, Śāṃtanava, "son of Śaṃtanu," resonates with these themes because of its coincidental sound-overlap with *śānta.* Perhaps further reflection on Śaṃtanu, husband of the Gaṅgā and the Yamunā, and father of the eight Vasus, will uncover some meaning to his name, composed as it is of *śam* and *tanu* (*tanu* signifies both "thin" and "body").

94. *MBh* 6.45.56–57. 95. *MBh* 6.46.4–5.

had been marked with sexual incorrectness, lay upon his hero's bed of arrows, assimilated visually to the image of the sun setting on the horizon, even as he has assimilated himself to the fading sun approaching its southern, winter solstice. Then, as a new sun will be born and begin to rise higher in the sky every day, the old sky will fade away forever.[96] The earth and the world may also be seen as needing *praśamana* here and as benefiting from Bhīṣma's thorough and soothing lessons; and so, too, may the audience of the text. The long series of Bhīṣma's instructions on dharma—the one thing in the world that guarantees a person a good future and especially well-being on the other side of death—constitutes a welcome moment of quiet and rest for them as well.[97]

This operational use of *anuśāsana* (instruction) to neutralize various irrational inimical energies is quite profound. It poses an effective counterweight to the rending narrative of the great Bhārata war, and it created another ancient Indian library of sacred texts. But *The Book of Peace* does not simply tell the story of an apotropaic *praśamana* of the king. There was a second motive for Bhīṣma's instruction of the new king. Yudhiṣṭhira saw opposition and contradiction between dharma and kingship.[98] He does not elaborate explicitly any more than has already been described or quoted above, but it is not difficult to infer the nature of the contradiction from other evidence in the *MBh* and from the point of many of the particular instructions given him. The king, in his very capacity as king, is the man who holds the power of *nigraha* (limiting, restraining, punishing) as well as *anugraha* (gratifying, favoring). And because of his duty to exercise *nigraha,* he is a figure of pain and death for others. The king must wield the *daṇḍa,* the rod of force, which is embodied in his army and in his punishments. The duties of kingship that cause pain and death run counter to the prevailing intellectual trend in ethics in the latter half of the first millennium B.C. During these times different ideals of harmlessness

96. Georg von Simson has also discussed Bhīṣma's assimilation to the solstice, though in a somewhat different light, as he is concerned to see the course of the Bhārata war as replicating the cycle of the year. This year starts and ends with the winter sun, and the war starts and ends with Bhīṣma, who represents "the sun of the Dakṣiṇāyana or perhaps only the sun approaching the winter solstice" (see "The Mythic Background of the *Mahābhārata,*" 195; and "Die zeitmythische Struktur des *Mahābhārata.*").

97. The text does not express these last two elements, and it may be an imposition on my part to suggest them. The closest the text comes to either of these latter ideas of *praśamana* is in its talking about the war's having removed the "thorn" of Duryodhana from the earth (as in 12.7.40, quoted above). This way of referring to an enemy brings up the issue of the word *śam* (Blessings! Well-being to you!) with regard to the earth or those who would move about upon it. But of course the text sees the earth's basic situation of need as having already been relieved by the violent removal of the thorn, whereas my suggestion is that the earth may still be in need of soothing and healing. At some point the "thorn" metaphor became a typical way to describe the king's administration of justice; see *AŚ* Book 4; and Scharfe, *The State in Indian Tradition,* 41, n. 122, and 241.

98. See *MBh* 12.7.5–6, and 37; also 38.4. After he agrees to accept the kingship, during his instruction by Bhīṣma, he expresses similar thoughts at 12.51.17, 56.2, 72.1, and 98.1.

were steadily gaining prominence and acceptance through the preaching and the behavior of brahmin and nonbrahmin preachers and holy men, and became an important theme of the powerful Mauryan emperor Aśoka's domestic propaganda.[99] This library of instructions broadly addresses these issues, arguing to Yudhiṣṭhira in their specificity and their aggregate generality that kingship does truly conform to dharma. In order to appreciate fully how Bhīṣma's instructions make these points, we must look more closely at the representation of dharma in the epic as a whole, and particularly at the way the authors of the epic have constructed Yudhiṣṭhira as a sometimes plain and sometimes subtle representation of a basic "bipolarity" of dharma.

Dharma and Kingship: Yudhiṣṭhira over Aśoka

The map of Bhīṣma's instructions in Part 3 of this introduction shows that the sense of malaise that frames the instruction—the king's profound embarrassment over his violent war-making, his conviction that kingship and Right are at odds, his receiving instructions from the queer[100] old grandfather who lays dying, his body riven innumerable times with arrows shot in Yudhiṣṭhira's name—is well reflected in some of the recurring themes of the instructional collection. Significant sections in *The Laws for Kings* and *The Laws for Gaining Absolute Freedom* raise the issues of political and social violence: there are aggressive worries over the breakdown of the hierarchy of society *(saṃkara)*, a preoccupation with the status and material well-being of brahmins, and a recurring defensiveness concerning brahmins and their contribution to the polity and the society. This malaise and these themes reflect, I think, the struggles of the period when the *Great Bhārata* was composed—from various preexisting materials—as a deliberately constructed social and political parable.[101]

99. According to G. M. Bongard-Levin (*Mauryan India*, 90), Candragupta Mauryan founded the Mauryan dynasty at Pāṭaliputra in Northeastern India (modern Patna in Bihar) in either 317 or 314 B.C.. Aśoka, the third Mauryan emperor, acceded to the throne in either 268 or 265 B.C. and ruled until 231or 228 B.C.

100. My use of the term here has nothing directly to do with the current assignment of this important English word to matters of homosexuality, even though part of what I do mean to indicate by it are the ways in which Bhīṣma is "sexually inappropriate" by the standards of his society and culture. See the LCP s.v. "Bhīṣma."

101. See note 2 of "The Translation Resumed" in the general introduction for my view of the phases of the *MBh*'s development. The interpretation of the *MBh* that I sketch below certainly falls within and supports Sheldon Pollock's general observation that "the integral theme of Sanskrit epic literature is kingship itself" (in Robert Goldman, ed., *The Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki*, 2: 10). However, I see the focus of this concern in the *MBh* to be less on the "attendant problems" of kingship ("the acquisition, maintenance, and execution of royal power, the legitimacy of succession, the predicament of transferring hereditary power within a royal dynasty") than with the broader conceptions of the *rightful* place and operation of power within society. The "attendant problems" of kingship are not ignored in the *MBh*; as I believe will become clear, however, the *MBh* is much more driven by themes of dharma than themes of artha. Nick Sutton ("Aśoka and Yudhiṣṭhira: A Historical Setting for the Ideological Tensions of the *Mahābhārata*?") also sees the *MBh*'s characterization of Yudhiṣṭhira as a post-Aśokan response, and he rightly points out that "the extended debates that surround [Yudhiṣṭhira's] notion of dharma reflect controversy that arose in the reigns of Aśoka and other rulers of similar disposition" (338).

I propose here that a thread of interconnection exists between the instructional anthologies of *The Laws for Kings* and *Law in Times of Distress*, *The Book of Peace* as a literary artifact within the *Mahābhārata* as a literary artifact, and the historical events that, I believe, stimulated the precipitation of this grand work from its antecedent materials.[102]

Dharma Conflicted and Dharma Contested

The Story of Tanu

In an eerie and evocative story near the end of *The Laws for Kings*, an ascetic named "Skinny" (Tanu), whose body was no bigger in circumference than a person's little finger, chanced to receive a king named "Heroic Force" (Vīradyumna), whom he had known before he took up the ascetic life. At some time in the past Skinny (though that was not his name then), a victim of "fate," which made him play the fool, had solicited from King Heroic Force a water-jug made of gold.[103] We are not told whether he got the gold (presumably he did), but we are informed that the king insulted him for asking. Crushed, the brahmin had resolved that he would never take anything from a ruler again (nor from anyone else), and he took up asceticism in order to shrink his expectations (*āśā*, also "hope; wish, desire") for, he thought, "When a man has hope it makes him prattle like a child."[104] Skinny's asceticism shrunk his expectations and his body, until he was barely visible. But now King Heroic Force had happened by

102. These historical events include the founding and rise to respectability and influence of new, non-Brahminic, non-Vedic religious movements from 400 B.C. onward; the rise of the Nandas as imperial rulers in Magadha (about 340 B.C.); the Mauryan replacement of the Nandas as imperial rulers (317 or 314 B.C.); the "dharma"-preaching of the emperor Aśoka (beginning about 260 B.C.); the overthrow of the Mauryans by the brahmin general Puṣyamitra Śuṅga (187 or 185 B.C.); and the rule of the dissolving empire and some of its major component kingdoms by brahmin families (Śuṅgas and Kāṇvas) until the latter half of the first century B.C., all of which took place against a background of numerous invasions and successful conquests of northwestern and western (and sometimes even central) Indian territory by the armies of (originally) trans-Indus rulers (Achæmenid Persians late in the sixth century, Alexander of Macedon late in the fourth century, the Bactrian Greeks throughout the very late fourth and the third centuries, and Central Asian Śakas in the second and first centuries). I believe all these events and the developments from them were highly disconcerting to many brahmins of these times, but I think Aśoka's affiliation of himself with the Buddhist Saṃgha, and his presuming to preach (Nāstika) "dharma" was the most important of all these events to the particular brahmins most responsible for the new *Great Bhārata*.

103. He may already have been an ascetic (since it was a water-jug he was asking for, an item even renouncers are allowed to possess), merely a lackadaisical one, but that seems unlikely. This story forms part of a longer episode called "The Song of the Seer Ṛṣabha" at *MBh* 12.125–26, a text that preaches the value of giving up hope (*āśā*). Our story basically forms the second of these two chapters.

104. *MBh* 12.126.32.

Skinny's retreat in search of his son "Tremendous Force" (Bhūridyumna), who had wandered away from the royal hunting party and gotten lost in the woods. The king was desperate as he searched for his son, and now, in the presence of the ascetic, he vacillated between hope and despair. The ascetic hospitably welcomed the king, who did not recognize the brahmin, and he listened to the king's dilemma with a certain wistfulness. Skinny then counseled the king against hopefulness, granting that it was difficult to give up, and admitting that he himself had often petitioned kings for one thing and another. King Heroic Force listened to Skinny's sermon with respect and comprehension, but then he pleaded that the ascetic restore his son to him anyway. Using his ascetic power and his wisdom, Skinny granted the king's wish with a laugh. Then, as all the other ascetics there watched, and as the king's whole entourage looked on, Skinny showed them all his marvelous divine form as the God Dharma and then disappeared into the woods.

This story may seem to be a long way from Yudhiṣṭhira's *śoka* and the question whether kingship can be dharma, but this artificial, didactic parable with Yudhiṣṭhira's father, Dharma, as its central character provides an important key to the epic. I suggest that its contrived depiction of royal insensitivity toward dharma parallels a basic argument of the epic as a whole, and that its personified representation of dharma is complex in very interesting and important ways. As this story focuses upon the resentment and self-loathing felt by some brahmin recipients of royal largesse, it calls attention to the imbalance of power in the relationship between royal donors and their beneficiaries. Even more important, it calls attention to the general issue of brahmins' relations to rulers, and it underscores the material weakness of brahmins in the relationship, while it also sharply dramatizes the claim that the strength of brahmins lies in their powers and achievements in connection to unseen realms beyond the mundane world.

The portrayal of dharma as an insulted and disappointed brahmin who has renounced his dependence upon the king and emaciated himself with forest asceticism seems to imply a bitter accusation against the armed stratum of society, the *kṣatra*. Bitter brahmin accusations against the abuses of the *kṣatra*—with responses to those abuses varying from the seer Vasiṣṭha's repeated attempts at suicide to Rāma Jāmadagnya's repeated slaughters of all the world's kṣatriyas[105]—are part of the constitution of the *Mahābhārata* as we have it. These accusations provide one ground

105. See the entire cycle of "brahmin-abuse" stories told to the Pāṇḍavas by the Gandharva Citraratha at *MBh* 1.164–72, van Buitenen, 1: 329–42. Vasiṣṭha's suicide attempts occur in 1.166–67. Several other "brahmin-abuse" stories appear in the *MBh*, particularly in Book 3, *The Book of the Forest*. Regarding Rāma Jāmadagnya, see my article, "The Rāma Jāmadagnya Thread of the *Mahābhārata:* A New Survey of Rāma Jāmadagnya in the Pune Text."

for the epic's *avatāra* frame-story,[106] with its purge of the *kṣatra* and its subsequent call for a proper kingship that will be restrained *(niyata)* and based upon Brahminic principles *(brāhmaṇya)*. The hopeless Dharma who so wistfully wanders off after restoring King Heroic Force's son is a stroke of symbol-making genius which captures and blends different strands of the complex history of dharma. The general narrative of the *Mahābhārata* is an apocalyptic tale (a tale of the violent disclosure of divine forces at work in the world for purposes understood by its authors to be holy) that imagines this sad situation being redressed. Those brahmins who framed the apocalyptic tale of a divinely led purge of the *kṣatra* and the education of a proper king were anything but wistful, resigned, and without hope. In this contrast between Skinny-Dharma on the one hand and Vyāsa (the brahmin supervisor of the *MBh*'s apocalyptic events—supported by the Gods Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa, Indra, and Śrī—and the eventual recorder of those events in the epic) on the other lies the powerful tension that gave rise to this particular redaction of the *MBh*.

I take up questions of the epic's connection to its political context shortly, but we must first venture into the topic of dharma, for the epic is centrally preoccupied with dharma and seems to reflect actual historical contention over real issues of who and what is Right. The *MBh* frequently invokes the idea of dharma, presents debates over which actions are dharma and which are not, and undertakes at various times in its didactic sections to define dharma, to specify what is and what is not dharma, and to discuss its relation to the other major human goods: artha, "success, power, riches, worldly gain"; and kāma, "pleasure." The son of the God Dharma (Yudhiṣṭhira) is one of the epic narrative's central protagonists; an incarnate form of the God Dharma (Vidura) is one of the main (though often neglected) advisors of the Bhārata court; and the epic includes several other stories of God Dharma's incarnations—stories that demonstrate a consistent thematic pattern. Two of the basic reasons for this recurring concern with dharma in the *MBh* follow: First, by about 400 B.C., the actual prescriptions and proscriptions of dharma within the brahmin tradition included some fundamental contradictions. Second, the idea of dharma as well as claims about our knowledge of it and its substance became highly contested matters during Nandan, Mauryan, and immediate post-Mauryan times (*ca.* 340–100 B.C.). During this period, in two important developments, the Buddhist movement made its own uses of the word *dharma*, and the Mauryan emperor Aśoka, claiming to have become a lay Buddhist, used his imperial position to propagate "dharma" to the populace of his empire. These non-Brahminical and imperial propagandistic appropriations of dharma infringed upon some of the actual substance of Brahminic dharma, and—what was even more serious—they

106. See my introduction to *The Book of the Women*, especially note 7.

transgressed the Brahminic claim to have unique authority to prescribe dharma and settle issues about dharma.

Two main senses of dharma occur in the *Mahābhārata*,[107] and both appear opposite each other in the figure of the God Dharma in this story. On the one hand dharma is something one does which then unfailingly connects one to an important good, or goods, that do not lie completely within the reach of normal human effort,[108] such as victory, glory, future prosperity, or a good afterlife. This older sense of dharma is manifested and affirmed in the story when the God Dharma, disguised as Skinny, does give the king what he desperately wishes for, the return of his son. The older sense of dharma is also present in the brahmin's prior history with King Heroic Force: Priests were given material support for their ritual services, both as part of the rituals and apart from them. The brahmin's current way of life and goals are the result of a disruption in the older patterns of dharma, the king's ridicule of him and his resentment of that ridicule; thus, the older sense of dharma is also present in this story insofar as Skinny remembers this past history, and still smarts. On the other hand, the newer sense of dharma is represented in Skinny's goal of completely eliminating the desire upon which the older sense of dharma was based, a goal of central importance in the yoga discourses that were gradually developing and gaining ground on several fronts during the late Vedic and Mauryan eras of Indian history. The newer concept of dharma often replaces personal self-interest with a devaluation of one's particular being affiliated with a sense of connectedness to all others and a concomitant sense of kindness toward others. In our story, Dharma does for the king the sort of good dharma always did, but it is a new Dharma who does so and for new reasons. These two themes of dharma essentially contradict each other (one is predicated upon the desire for some great good, and the other seeks to expunge all desire), but the God Dharma here represents them both simultaneously. The highest good of the old dharma is its power to yield benefits on the other side of death (partly for this reason, actions which are dharma have the transcendent quality of being "religious," that is "sacred," or "holy"). The fundamental association of dharma with death is first represented in the story slightly obliquely in the king's being deprived of his son. While the king does not know the boy to be dead, his disappearance suggests his death and parallels several stories in the epic that turn upon

107. See Appendix 4, in which I refer to the first sense of *dharma* as sense 1; it is rendered (in senses 1A–1D) with various words signifying "Meritorious, Lawful Deeds." The second major sense is referred to as sense 3 (the far less significant sense "Right" is sense 2) and is rendered with "Virtue."

108. According to the Mīmāṃsā, one of the fundamental qualifications for making use of the ritual actions of dharma is the desire, kāma, to gain the benefit, *phala* (fruit), that the Veda or Veda-based tradition says is to come from the rite.

the death of a son. Dharma's restoration of the boy to his father resembles the boy's being called back to life.[109] Another sort of connection between death and dharma is inherent in Skinny's, Dharma's, emaciation, which represents the dwindling of dharma in the face of royal abuse.[110] We also see here a contradiction within Skinny himself, for, as a number of texts in *The Laws for Gaining Absolute Freedom* make clear, the successful transformation of oneself in terms of the ideals of yoga leaves no lingering resentment. This tension at the heart of its representation of Dharma makes this story an important a key to the *MBh*, its authors, their construction of the character of Yudhiṣṭhira, and Bhīṣma's "library of Hinduism." The ambivalence of dharma evident in this story occurs and reoccurs throughout much of the *MBh*, both narratively and didactically. The tension between these contradictory senses of dharma constituted the spiritual force that drove some brahmins to create the *Mahābhārata* as we now have it,[111] and resolving this tension was one of their most urgent and earnest agendas. A brief detour into the history and philosophy of dharma will enable us to glimpse some of the profound differences between these two notions of dharma and provide a better foundation for understanding many of Bhīṣma's lessons.

The Complex Senses of Dharma in the Mahābhārata

The *Mahābhārata* clearly exhibits a transition in the use of the word dharma, a transition which obviously corresponds to the historical shift from the ritual ethics of deeds to the newer yoga-ethics of refining one's self. I present briefly here the basic senses of the word from the point of view of its usage in the *MBh*. This presentation digresses somewhat from the current discussion of ambivalent and contested senses of dharma; it describes the word *dharma* a little more fully than this discussion requires, so that readers can see and understand how I have gone about translating *dharma* in the main body of this work.

109. Among other instances of this connection of death and dharma, I will cite only the episode at the end of *The Book of the Forest* (*MBh* 3.295–98; van Buitenen, 2: 795–805), where Dharma, disguised as a *baka* (crane, heron, or stork), kills the four younger Pāṇḍavas who are heedless of his commands. Yudhiṣṭhira, the son of Dharma, then does heed Dharma's commands, successfully answers his father's riddles and tests, and is allowed to recover his brothers' lives.

110. Obviously, some aspects of the ascetic and yogic agenda to eliminate desire can be likened to death as well. I do not pursue these likenesses though, because asceticism and yoga have very complicated motivations and representations, and if they have some unified way of relating to death, that is not yet clear to me.

111. In everything I write below about brahmins, I do not mean to say all brahmins, nor brahmins in general, nor even most brahmins. I mean *some* brahmins who are animated by their own particular senses of privilege, grievance, and opportunity—all such senses, of course, being related to their own particular notions of Brahmanism. Also, all that I assert about these particular brahmins are inferences based primarily upon my reading of the *MBh* against what remains of the historical record of India between 500 B.C. and A.D. 500.

The Older, Basic Sense of the Word Dharma: *Normative Action That Benefits Its Agent in the Future, Chiefly in the Afterlife*[112]

At the base of the concept of dharma, and implicit in each instance of the word, are the three distinct ideas: (1) "Action" (*karman*, as understood in Brahminic India from the time of the *Vedas* on); (2) an action's being "normative" (or not); and (3) that such action is beneficial (or, in the case of *adharma*, painful) for the agent in the afterlife (in the *Mahābhārata* the afterlife is typically thought of as life in heaven [or hell]; sometimes it is life again in this world by rebirth [*saṃsāra*][113]). In its most general uses the word *dharma* signifies a deed (first of all, a rite), or a kind of work done repeatedly, that is endorsed by society generally and by its specific authoritative institutions (the brahmin teachers, the king and his government, the "strictly observant," "good people" [the *santaḥ*][114] of the "world"), and benefits its doer not here and not now (as do the pragmatic actions of artha), but in the future, in the next world or life, after death. Dharma, like all *karman*, is not conceived of as only a physical act carried out observably with one's body at some point in time. As early as the *Ṛg Veda*, a person's deeds are conceived of as having some kind of continued existence beyond the time of their execution.[115] Later theories of *karman* are not radical departures from that, but seem rather to be attempts to work out the implications of this old conviction. Whatever the details of the history of the words, in the *Mahābhārata karman* and its cognates typically refer to "deeds" both as publicly observable acts *and* as unseen accumulations that somehow stay with their doers and operate automatically for their benefit or harm in the life they will experience after the death of their current bodies.[116] As a certain kind of *karman*, dharma—that is, one's deeds of dharma, the deeds one has done that are required or "fixed" for people such as oneself—have some kind of continued existence in association with their author. When the word *dharma* refers primarily to these "good deeds," it has been customary to translate it with "Merit," and I follow this custom.[117] The consequences of doing dharma are conceived of first in individual, personal terms, and in terms of the afterlife, but there are also secondary, indirect benefits for the agent and others in this world.[118] This secondary aspect of dharma becomes one of the primary features of the special dharma of kings, an important aspect of which is that the particular nature and effects of the king's actions are formulated in terms of general effects in the outer world and in the whole of society, in addition to being conceived of in terms of his individual fate in the next world

Dharma was grounded in the knowledge brahmins had of the unseen realm of the Gods and *brahman*. The proper use of the ritual forms of dharma depended upon the expertise and good will of brahmins, and the material well-being of brahmins depended upon a supply of clients able and willing to support them for that expertise. Because dharma depended upon unseen powers and unseen connections between certain human acts and the benefits claimed to flow from those acts (their being unseen is, of course, a necessary condition of religious transcendence), the very essence of what brahmins offered others made the brahmins' social, political, and economic position vulnerable. Brahmins who would be priests had to demonstrate in their ordinary lives sufficient familiarity and contact with the unseen realm to be credible as intermediaries to its Gods and as expert users of the mantras (those who made this demonstration successfully did this for the most part by learning and maintaining in memory the large text of the Veda), and brahmins who would sustain themselves at this had to monopolize their clients' access to the realm of sacred inspirations (the Gods, the transcendent One) and solutions to life's problems and terrors (ritual techniques, divination). Brahmins' economic and political needs were addressed in part by the notion of dharmas (duties, particular kinds of work, *karman*) that were proper to different kinds of people—*svadharma*.[119]

112. Much of what I say here is expressed very well in a magisterial article by Paul Hacker, "Dharma im Hinduismus" to which I came by way of Wilhelm Halbfass's insightful essay "*Dharma* in the Self-Understanding of Traditional Hinduism" (Chapter 17 of his *India and Europe: An Essay in Understanding*). Readers with a serious interest in the concept of dharma as such should consult Hacker's piece for a fuller and more sharply focused treatment of dharma in Brahminic Indian thought in the general era in which the *Mahābhārata* was developing into the form in which we have it today. Of necessity Hacker's article is based upon the tradition's own scholastic attempts to formulate the matter of dharma in definitive ways. Passages of the *MBh* sometimes teach doctrines of dharma in similarly scholastic ways, but more typically the word *dharma* is used in the *Mahābhārata* in the rough and tumble of practical discourse. It is used in various, non-univocal ways that usually take the word for granted, or are unclear, or not completely developed.

113. These two ways of conceiving of and verbally expressing life after death are not as strikingly different as they may seem, at least not in the ancient Sanskrit texts that give us glimpses of developments in ideas of the soul, the afterlife, and personal fate from the time of the *Ṛg Veda* to the *Mahābhārata*. At times those texts conceive of "going to" heaven as being reborn in heaven; see Gonda, *Die Religionen Indiens*, 1: 206.

114. The word *santaḥ* is the plural of *sat/sant*, "good, right, true."

115. See, for example some of the passages discussed by H. Bodewitz in his "Life after Death in the Ṛgvedasaṃhitā," 33–34.

116. A person's accumulated *karman* matures and operates necessarily, in its own time and on its own, mechanically, automatically (*svabhāvataḥ*, in the language of the *Mahābhārata*). A person's fate is thus his or her own doing, and no other, higher power or intelligence judges people, records and evaluates their behavior, and rewards or punishes them for what they have done—a point duly emphasized by Hacker; see "*Dharma im Hinduismus*," 103–104.

117. Readers must bear in mind that this fundamental aspect of the word is *almost always present* in every instance of the word's occurrence, at least by implication, even when *dharma* is rendered merely as "Law, Right, or Virtue." And it bears repeating that this feature of dharma is present because dharma is fundamentally a form of *karman*, action.

118. This point is the burden of "The Description of Dharma" at *MBh* 12.251 and is one of the points of the conversations between Bali and the Goddess Śrī and between Indra and Śrī reported at *MBh* 12.220 and 12.221.

119. The *Mahābhārata* contains comprehensive statements of the different dharmas that apply to the four different Orders of society (*varṇadharma*) and of the different dharmas to be

People in different Orders of society *(varṇa-s)* should perform their work and theirs alone; if people do the work of another Order, their action is a "Mis-deed," the "Wrong Work" *(vikarman)*.[120] If non-brahmins, or unworthy brahmins, can perform religious functions for important Aryan clientele, the proper, educated brahmin loses his distinctiveness, his *raison d'être*, and his livelihood. Similarly, if brahmins who cannot find an appropriate professional livelihood can serve in kṣatriya or vaiśya professions, then again, the distinctiveness and justification of brahmins disappears with their fall, and the pressure to support them and maintain their distinctiveness is significantly diminished.[121] Thus, the abhorrence of the breakdown of *varṇadharma*, the dread "mixture" or "confusion" *(saṃkara)* of people performing work other than their proper *svadharma* is based not primarily upon an attachment to dharma as "order," nor to hierarchy for its own sake, nor upon some fundamental conservatism. The tenacious commitment to *varṇadharma* is based first and foremost[122] on the very real economic, political, and psychological benefits of the hierarchy for its chief supporters and their genuine religious conviction that this particular system is holy, right, and good.[123]

As is fully evident in *The Laws for Kings* of the *Mahābhārata*, and as Madeleine Biardeau has rightly pointed out,[124] the maintenance of the

done by persons in the different, religiously ideal patterns of behavior (the *āśramas*) that came to be distinguished as ethically alternative ways for good people to live (*āśramadharma*). One typical presentation of *varṇadharma* is found at *Mahābhārata* 12.60.6–30, and the classical *āśramadharma* is presented well at 12.184.5–185.4. Interesting, nonclassical (and not entirely clear) discussions of *āśramadharma* are found in 12.62 and 63. The word *dharma* in these contexts refers to a complex collection of deeds and activities, responsibilities and habits that is unique to a certain class of people.

120. The most famous formulation of this standard is *BhG* 3.35, but the idea is stated repeatedly in the *MBh* in 84f on "Permitted and Prohibited Occupations and Life-Patterns and the King's Responsibility to Enforce These." See 12.60.10 and 22; 62.5, 63.4, and 65.11.

121. This economic fact is part of the importance of the ideal of living by gleaning (the *uñchavṛtti*, destitution one step above starvation), which was strongly recommended to underemployed brahmins. See the praise of it in the elaborately constructed narrative, "The Story on Gleaning as a Way of Life," at the very end of *The Laws for Gaining Absolute Freedom*, 12.340–53.

122. "First and foremost" implies the existence of other motives, some of which may be judged ignoble by one ethical standard or another. The brahmin tradition, as expressed on occasion in Bhīṣma's instructions, was fully aware that some brahmins were venal and some hypocritical.

123. My general arguments about the *MBh* and its concerns with social hierarchy draw significant support from Wilhelm Rau, who points out in *Staat und Gesellschaft im alten Indien nach den Brāhmaṇa-texten dargestellt* that the four *varṇas* appear differently in the Brāhmaṇas than they do in later literature: earlier there was vertical mobility and not the tight association with birth typical later (63)—a point occasionally met with in the *MBh*. Rau's point was aptly emphasized by Sheldon Pollock as he made the general observation that in "the three or four hundred years following the middle vedic age (*c.* 800 B.C.) . . . the most important social development seems to have been a far more markedly defined hierarchical ordering of society. The pyramidal social organization maintained by institutionalized inequality is now often met with" (see the introduction to his translation of the *Ayodhyākāṇḍa* in Goldman, ed., *Rāmāyaṇa*, 2: 10–11.)

124. Madeleine Biardeau, "The Salvation of the King in the *Mahābhārata*."

hierarchy and the prevention of *saṃkara* requires armed force within society.[125] The issue of violence in particular brought the older senses of dharma into conflict with the newer senses.

Further Extension and Development of Dharma

The idea of *svadharma* is complemented by the further idea that some dharmas are common to people across the distinctions of *varṇa*.[126] The statements referred to earlier as laying out *varṇadharma* and *āśramadharma*[127] include specifications of behavioral norms that are explicitly said to be common to all the separate classes. Before beginning his list of the different *varṇadharmas* in *MBh* 12.60, Bhīṣma said, "Nine things apply to all the Orders of society: Not being disposed to anger, speaking the truth, sharing, patience, begetting offspring on one's wife, purity, lack of malice, rectitude, and supporting one's dependents."[128] In the midst of his specification of the *āśramadharmas* in 12.184, the seer Bhṛgu said, "Harmlessness, truthfulness, being without anger and ascetic observances apply to all the Religious Patterns of Life."[129] Intellectually these traits are still dharma because they have normative status, and they are beneficial in the next world, but labeling such inner, subjective attitudes and dispositions as dharma marks a striking development of the idea of dharma—one that sees the word lose its earlier connection to concrete "actions" or "deeds." This development leads into the second aspect of the epic's ambivalence about dharma, and a brief, general discussion of this development will lead us back to the main argument.

Newer Senses of Dharma: The Rise of the Yoga Discourse and Values of Social Harmony

The second sense of dharma in the *Mahābhārata* was the result of the new religious perspectives and values of yoga that gradually emerged alongside older Vedic ones in the middle third of the first millennium B.C. in northern India.[130] The particular historical details of this movement are lost in the

125. Some passages that state or clearly imply a direct connection between the king's punitive duties and the survival of a socioeconomic order that maintains a place for properly educated brahmins and their contribution are 12.63.25–28, 65.5cd–13, all of 12.77–78, 12.91.6–9, and all of the striking 12.134. In 12.130 (which acknowledges that certain practices of some brahmins may appear scandalous to those without sufficient "power of understanding, or discrimination" [*vijñānabala*]), we find cautions against punishing brahmins based on mere gossip; see especially 12.130.9–15.

126. These are referred to in the Sanskrit sources as *sādhāraṇadharma* and *sāmānyadharma*, "dharma that is shared, or the same for all."

127. See above at note 119.

128. *MBh* 12.60.7–8ab.

129. *MBh* 12.184.15cd.

130. Charting the origin and development of the idea of *ahiṃsā* and related attitudes and behaviors has proven a vexing scholarly problem. Most recently (and with some discussion of earlier and recent scholarship) Henk Bodewitz has argued forcefully that *ahiṃsā* and related attitudes and forms of behavior developed primarily in the context of ancient India's non-Vedic, ascetic religions: "Asceticism formed the starting-point of *ahiṃsā*, and, though it cannot be definitely proved that this asceticism was non-Vedic, its association with the bloody rituals of the Vedic priests is out of the question. One may rather assume that *ahiṃsā* originally

past, but we do know that a broad, heterogeneous "discourse of yoga" gradually evolved,[131] which expressed itself in texts and institutions within and without the Brahminic tradition. The disparate trends of thought in this discourse refocused religious thinking upon the individual and eventually challenged the earlier dedication to priestly and communal sacrificial rites (*karman*, "action," par excellence) in favor of cultivating some kind of saving knowledge *(vidyā, jñāna)* that would lift one permanently and absolutely beyond the vicious circle of action, death, rebirth, and action again, which the thinkers of this discourse came to impute to the older way of rites. This vicious circle was eventually generalized as "Rebirth" *(saṃsāra)* and understood to be driven by the self-perpetuating continuum of desire (kāma), action *(karman)*, and rebirth *(saṃsāra)*.[132] To gain absolute freedom *(mokṣa)* from this continuum and achieve whatever beatitude a particular movement conceived, an aspirant needed somehow to interrupt this cycle, to which end different disciplines were developed, regulated by different traditions of metaphysical thought and different institutional histories.[133]

belonged to the ascetic anti-ritualism, which was especially represented by the heretics (Buddhists and Jains) and only hesitantly obtained a foothold in the older Vedic Upaniṣads. . . . [T]he concept of *ahiṃsā* started to play a role only in a late phase of Vedism" ("Hindu *Ahiṃsā* and Its Roots," 41). Bodewitz's argument is a strong rebuttal of the widely accepted position of Hanns-Peter Schmidt that *ahiṃsā* grew up within the Vedic religious discourse as much as in non-Vedic circles of thought; see Schmidt, "The Origin of *Ahiṃsā*," and a follow-up discussion of his arguments and their reception, "Ahiṃsā and Rebirth." Also important for the history of *ahiṃsā* and the understanding of its importance in the *MBh* are Ludwig Alsdorf's *Beitrage zur Geschichte von Vegetarismus und Rinderverehrung in Indien;* Ian Proudfoot's *Ahiṃsā and a Mahābhārata Story;* and Mukund Lath's, "The Concept of *ānṛśaṃsya* in the *Mahābhārata*." Also critically important for understanding developments in ethical thought prior to and contemporary with the *Mahābhārata* are the important questions and issues involved in the doctrines of the *āśramas*, the "Religious Patterns of Life." For an extensive discussion of the development of this ethical theme, see Patrick Olivelle's *The Āśrama System.*

131. The word *yoga* may be used as a generic term for this movement and all its historical varieties, and in this sense yoga basically signifies a (more or less ascetic) regimen in which a person holds the body still and focuses the mind in meditation *(dhyāna)*. The background of this word includes old and widespread senses of harnessing some powerful being (a draft animal, an army) and putting it to work (hence the word's senses as "regimen" and eventually "device" or "stratagem"). *MBh* texts that specifically describe yoga (four texts explicitly focused upon yoga are 12.188, 289, 294, and 304) emphasize the physical difficulty of the regimen and the strength required to stay with it. Widespread modern explanations in terms of the theological idea of "joining" the soul to God or *brahman* are not ancient and not strictly accurate (for the basic Brahminic teaching is that the soul is *brahman* already, and the later Sāṃkhya teaching critically emphasizes realizing the absolute *difference* of the complex of mind and body that make up a person and that person's soul).

132. *MBh* 12.174 gives an animated and succinct statement of this cycle.

133. Upaniṣadic brahmins worked, in meditation, to displace limited forms of desire with the bliss of the "knowledge of" *brahman;* Jainas sought to stop the influx of fresh *karman* and ascetically "burn off" old *karman;* Buddhists sought to undermine the psychological basis of desire, thereby "extinguishing" (*nirvāṇa*) the erroneous idea of selfhood, desire, *karman*, and rebirth. Each tradition developed institutions of "withdrawal" (*nivṛtti*) and renunciation peculiar to itself, with the Buddhists rather quickly developing a cenobitic monastic life governed by a canonical Rule (the *vinaya*).

Traces of this discourse appear in various later Vedic texts; we find it flowering in the oldest Upaniṣads;[134] it is thoroughly evident in some of the brahmin *sūtra* literature and in the *Mahābhārata*, and it has become the most prestigious kind of Brahminism in Manu's *The Authoritative Teaching of the Laws* by the beginning of the Christian era.[135] During this same time, important non-Vedic, non-Brahminic movements also surfaced with yoga philosophies and disciplines of their own, following the two grand renunciatory examples of two princes: first, that of Vardhamāna of the Jñātṛ clan in northeastern India, who reformed the emphatically ascetic movement that came to be known as the Jainas; and, second, that of Siddhārtha Gautama, prince of the Śākya clan of northeastern India, who de-emphasized asceticism in favor of insight into the true nature of experience and suffering *(bodhi)* and founded the Buddhist Saṅgha. Another historically important movement was that of the Ājīvikas,[136] who followed the absolutely deterministic teachings of Gośāla Maskarīputra. The traditions that took root outside the Brahminic tradition successfully established political, social, and economic support for themselves in the new monarchic and imperial polities growing up in the Eastern Gaṅgā valley after 400 B.C.[137]

What these movements all shared was a commitment to the idea of "renunciation" *(saṃnyāsa)*, in which a person radically separated himself from the usual demands of family and social life to cultivate the asceticism (Jains), the insight (Buddhists), or the gnosis (brahmins) by which a person achieved beatitude. As these movements developed their particular metaphysical philosophies and their particular disciplines for realizing ultimate beatitude (along with the institutions for supporting people engaged in the discipline), they also developed practical ethical outlooks that were consistent with their metaphysics and their disciplines. Certain

134. These are the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* and *Chāndogya Upaniṣads*, which we should now (in light of the moving down of the date of the Buddha—see note 137 below) move forward roughly one hundred years to the sixth or fifth century B.C. See Patrick Olivelle, *Upaniṣads* (xxxvi, esp. n. 21); see also Olivelle's comments on the prevailing milieux of the Upaniṣadic texts, which suggest a more urban than rural provenance for them (xxix). The urbanism that is relevant is that of the Gaṅgā valley between the sixth and fourth centuries B.C. (xxviii).

135. See Schmidt, "The Origin of *Ahiṃsā*."

136. See A. L. Basham, *History and Doctrine of the Ājīvikas.*

137. The Nandas (śūdras who became the first imperial rulers of India) rose to power sometime around 340 B.C. (see Bongard-Levin, *Mauryan India*, 69) and are regarded in Jain tradition to have been zealous supporters of the Jains (70). The Nandas also have a bad reputation as *adhārmika* (outside Law, Unlawful) and "destroyer of all the kṣatriyas" in later Brahminic Purāṇas (69). It is also the case that recently some expert scholars of early Buddhism have "dethrone[d] the old consensus" regarding the Buddha's date (the words of Lance S. Cousins, "The Dating of the Historical Buddha: A Review Article"). In the conclusion of the online version of his review of Heinz Bechert's two edited volumes, *The Dating of the Historical Buddha*, Cousins concludes that "from the point of view of reasonable probability the evidence seems to favour [that] we should no doubt speak of a date for the Buddha's Mahaparinibbana (death) of c. 400 B.C.—I choose the round number deliberately to indicate that the margins are rather loose."

general ethical trends common to the whole broad discourse came to underlie the newer sense of dharma that became so important during the Mauryan empire, especially in the "Dharma campaign" of the emperor Aśoka. These general trends tended to value harmonious relations between oneself and others—harmonious relations that might involve sacrifice, even altruism, on one's own part. Such dispositions as generosity, friendliness, kindness, patience, self-control, avoiding resentment, not being self-centered and proud, and so forth were praised, and their opposites were criticized. Chief of all these dispositions or attitudes was "harmlessness," *ahiṃsā*, "doing no harm, causing no pain, to any sensitive being." Deeds that caused pain or harm to others were seen as the worst forms of action, and thus they had a large negative effect on the continuum of *karman*-energy that animated one and propelled one through life and rebirth.

The issues of violence and nonviolence are obviously deeply important human issues, and the extent to which fundamental themes of Indian religions and philosophies focus directly or indirectly upon them is quite remarkable. The successes of Jainism and Buddhism in challenging the older Brahminism were based partly upon their offering a wider range of people a simpler and clearer hope of escaping from a world characterized by life and death and inevitable harm, a world where everyone is either "eater" or "eaten"; that is, upon visions of a universe that emphasized the general uniformity of life and consciousness and upon a related ethic of harmlessness. The Brahminic vision of the world, focusing as it did—and as Jainism and Buddhism did not—upon a universal plenum that entailed an ultimate affirmation and not a rejection of the universe, saw the universe and its violence as a continuous series of transformations within the substance of the eternal *brahman* or, later, within the body of a God worthy of affiliation and devotion. Accepting the violence of the universe is a necessary corollary of Brahminism's affirmation of monism, of whatever variety. As the violence of the universe is a necessary part of what is ultimately good in the universe, it cannot be rejected in a simple and absolute manner, as Jain and Buddhist doctrine required. The boundaries within the universe, insofar as the universe is a meaningful and productive plurality, must be maintained, by appropriate violence when necessary. That is, violence (in the form of the king's *nigraha*) is used to prevent *saṃkara*, which threatens the continued existence of the world as a meaningful and productive cosmos, a place where different levels of knowledge and action persist, in which the Gods get worshiped, the Vedas get recited, the brahmins survive.[138]

138. S. J. Tambiah, in *World Conqueror and World Renouncer*, compares the underlying philosophies of Brahminism and Buddhism in this way: "Buddhism is basically without ontology (in the sense that its ultimate elements, the dharmas [a particular technical, philosophical use of the word *dharma* that is not directly related to the senses of dharma we have been discussing], being momentary flashings, impermanent without duration, cannot be indexical of the 'essence' of things or immanent entities like 'self'), while Hinduism has this ontology, whose building blocks are notions of self, deity, and *atman*, and so on, as existent entities" (19). He goes on to say, "The brahmanical [account of creation] conjoins divinity with the process of creation of the world and its beings, and also with the creation of the sacred law and codes of conduct, as one single, total, unitary phenomenon. The creation of nature and the creation of culture are part of a single process. There is no separation between the laws of nature and the laws of man. Contrary to the divine creative process, the Buddhist myth gives a picture of a creative differentiating process, which essentially moves forward, not by divine energy, but by the *kammic* [Pali-based word for Sanskrit-based *karmic*] energy produced by the degenerative and immoral acts of human beings themselves" (22).

Many of the authors and redactors of the *Mahābhārata* were highly sympathetic to the new developments of yoga and dharma and participated in the development of their Brahminic forms.[139] At least some of them were committed to the idea that *ahiṃsā* and the virtues that were its close ethical and verbal kin[140] were the "supreme dharma" *(paramadharma)*. In spite of its frequent immersion in violent motives and bloody deeds initiated and inspired by Gods, the *Mahābhārata* also consistently wages a spiritual and intellectual struggle to tame and becalm the urge to violence. Professor Mukund Lath has eloquently affirmed the fundamental importance of this struggle to the nature of the *Mahābhārata* in a recent article, "The Concept of *ānṛśaṃsya* in the *Mahābhārata*." This fact, this commitment on the part of many brahmins, is the fundamental source of the ambivalence concerning dharma in the *Mahābhārata*. For at the same time as many aspects of the newer dharma had grown up within or been assimilated into Brahminism, the older ideas of dharma were obviously still fundamental for many, perhaps most brahmins. Many facets of the view of the world in Brahminic yoga could be seen as complementary to the older understanding of the world based on ritual deeds, and much of the newer ethical perspective was also complementary (though it clearly opposed, rather than complemented, the sacrificing of animals). And even where there was opposition or contradiction between the two understandings

139. See for example the resolution of the Ruru story, which occurs as part of the *MBh*'s second beginning: "Tradition teaches that the very highest Meritorious, Lawful Duty (dharma) is Harmlessness *(ahiṃsā)* toward all living beings, so a brahmin should never, at any time, harm any living beings. An important statement of the Vedas says, 'A brahmin is born in this world *friendly*.' One who knows the Vedas and their auxiliaries removes the fears of all beings. Harmlessness, truthfulness, and forbearance of others—these are definitely the Meritorious, Lawful Duty (dharma) of a brahmin that is superior even to maintaining the text of the Vedas. But the Meritorious, Lawful Duty (dharma) of a kṣatriya—inflicting punishment, harshness, defending creatures—does not suit you. What you were doing is the deed of a kṣatriya" (*MBh* 1.11.12–15). Some may object that this passage is a relatively late addition to the epic, and in some senses that is certainly true. But such sentiments are not at all rare in the Pune text of the *MBh*, and if my general argument here is correct, we may have to see many of them as belonging to the original, post-Mauryan written redaction of the *MBh* (see note 2 of the general introduction to this volume).

140. Among those related virtues are *abhayadāna* (giving safety, freedom from danger, freedom from fear to others), *adroha* (not being threatening, menacing, aggressive), *ānṛśaṃsya* (gentleness, kindness), and various expressions for patience, tolerance, putting up with others' trying behavior, being long-suffering (e.g., *kṣamā, titikṣā*, forms of the verb root √*mṛṣ*).

and traditions, communities and even individuals might well have affirmed opposing values and themes simultaneously, just as the story of Skinny represents a contradictory image of dharma.[141] The older persisted and assimilated much of the new as it developed, and there seems to have been no great need to resolve the oppositions between the two sorts of dharma. That easy complementarity is gone in the *MBh*, however. The *MBh*, as we have it in the Gupta text, and as it probably existed in the written redaction I believe was created in the first century B.C., stridently affirms both *ahiṃsā* and the grotesque, apocalyptic violence of the Pāṇḍava-led purge and destruction of the *kṣatra*. This opposition called for a resolution, and it did so primarily through the figure of Yudhiṣṭhira, the son of Dharma. What provoked this development?

The Double Crisis of Dharma Provoked by the Mauryans

A crisis occurred for those traditional brahmins and brahmin-supporters, the *santaḥ*—the "pious," the "strictly observant people" of the *Mahābhārata*—when the śūdra Nandas consolidated imperial power at Paṭaliputra in 340 B.C. and became zealous patrons of the Jains.[142] The later traditions of the Purāṇas remember one Nanda ruler as "the destroyer of all the kṣatriyas," and label the dynasty as *adhārmika*, "Outside Law, Un-Lawful,"[143] which merely states the obvious from the point of view of the *santaḥ*.[144] Different sources, including classical Western sources, register great discontent with the Nandas and their burdensome policies.[145] Evidently kṣatriya legitimacy was restored when Candragupta Maurya overthrew the Nandas.[146] But the *santaḥ* could only be partly relieved by this development, for Candragupta and his successors patronized the "heathens" *(nāstikas)*. Candragupta is supposed to have converted to Jainism and died a Jain saint.[147] His son Bindusāra also patronized the new non-brahmin movements, particularly the Ājīvikas, though Buddhist sources stress that he also gave support to brahmins.[148] And then Aśoka, sometime around 260 B.C. to 255 B.C.,[149] launched an

141. In line with William James's remarks about the "Divided Self" in Lecture 8 of *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, I take the intellectual disarray I am suggesting here to be the normal human situation. Complete intellectual consistency is achieved by relatively few individuals who are very free of life's exigencies; and even these philosophers typically manage to unify only certain limited areas of their life, feeling, and thought. When we think of persons over the period of a whole adult life, the issue of consistency becomes even more problematic, and when we turn to communities and consider the haphazard nature and inexact quality of much human communication, we should be surprised and pleased that we find the marvelous (or, sometimes, surprised and troubled by the frightful) continuities of texts and traditions that do exist.

142. This is according to Jain traditions; see Bongard-Levin, *Mauryan India*, 70.

143. Ibid.

144. That is, it affirms the obvious wrongfulness of śūdras ruling over twice-born people.

145. Bongard-Levin, *Mauryan India*, 69–70.

146. Ibid., 71–72. 147. Ibid., 109–110 (n. 118). 148. Ibid., 81.

149. See Bongard-Levin, *Mauryan India*, 83–84, for a discussion of the dates of Aśoka's earliest inscriptions, the Minor Rock Edicts. The most cautious dating, that of P. H. L.

imperial "Dharma campaign" that not only endorsed this standing Mauryan "abuse" of brahmins, but also criticized some old brahmin practices and even put a halt to certain Brahminic or Brahminically sanctioned festivals. Thus the Nandas and early Mauryans elevated the Veda-denying, brahmin-criticizing movements to positions of imperial honor equal to or superior to that of the Vedas. In so doing, these rulers challenged the claims of brahmins to be the sole "seers" of unseen, transcendent realms, undermined the clear hierarchy of the *varṇa* model of society,[150] and severely diminished the status and privileges of brahmins, threatening their livelihoods and, indirectly, their continued existence.[151] The perspectives of yoga and the socially sensitive ethics represented in shorthand by the word *ahiṃsā* were no longer simply a "kindler, gentler complement" to the old sense of dharma as a set of (sometimes bloody) obligatory deeds that one did to guarantee a better afterlife. They had become the emblems of an insulting and dangerous movement.[152]

In about 265 B.C.,[153] Aśoka came to power as the head of the Mauryan empire, which had been founded by his grandfather, Chandragupta, forty-nine years earlier at Pāṭaliputra. He became a lay follower of the Buddha and a patron of the Saṅgha, probably seven or eight years after his accession,[154] evidently before his bloody conquest of Kaliṅga in the

Eggermont, puts them after seven to ten years of Aśoka's reign, which, according to Bongard-Levin (89–90), began either in 268 or 265 B.C.

150. How clear that model might actually have been "on the ground" is, of course, a good question. It is clear from Bhīṣma's collection of instructions that the *varṇa* hierarchy was regarded as precarious, and that actual circumstances were often much less "wholesome" than brahmin social philosophers might wish. See the points of Rau and Pollock mentioned earlier (note 123) regarding the more rigid fixing of the *varṇa* hierarchy in the latter half of the first millennium B.C..

151. I believe that these are all actual implications of the Nandan and Mauryan elevation of *nāstika* elites to more or less coequal status with brahmins. How various brahmins in different parts of India (in various kingdoms in the heartland of the Doab, in various *āśramas* and *tīrthas* scattered all across northern India) might have perceived and reacted to this elevation is of course impossible to say. I am suggesting here, however, that the post-Mauryan written redaction of the *MBh* (see note 2 to the general introduction to this volume) was due to the artifice of some brahmins who were offended and embittered by these developments and who set themselves to writing history "as it should have happened."

152. "There was a lot of killing in Vedic ritual and often the texts do not regard this as a problem" (Bodewitz, "Hindu *Ahiṃsā*, 25). While they may not "often" have regarded it as a problem, I suggest, with Schmidt, that at least sometimes they did have some concerns about it. But then to have a "heathen-sympathizing tyrant" such as Aśoka forbid the killing of animals in rites transforms the issue in a fundamental political way.

153. As I mentioned just above in note 149, Bongard-Levin (*Mauryan India*, 89–90), after a detailed discussion of the dating parameters) gives 268 or 265 B.C. for Aśoka's accession to the Mauryan throne, with 317 or 314 B.C. for Candragupta's accession. P. H. L. Eggermont puts Aśoka's accession in 268 B.C. ("The Year of the Buddha's Mahāparinirvāṇa," 246). Romila Thapar gives Aśoka's accession date as 269–68 B.C. (*Aśoka and the Decline of the Mauryas*, 33), but she herself calls attention to the difficulties in settling the exact chronology of Aśoka. John Strong offers the more diffident "circa 270 B.C." (*The Legend of King Aśoka*, 3).

154. See Bongard-Levin, *Mauryan India*, 85; Eggermont says this occurred in the eighth year (261 B.C.); see "The Year of the Buddha's Mahāparinirvāṇa," 245–46.

ninth year of his rule.[155] In the thirteenth year of his rule he began issuing his Major Rock Edicts in multiple copies in different parts of his empire as part of a concerted effort to teach what he called dharma to his imperial subjects. As A. L. Basham put it,

> The edicts are in part inspired by Achæmenid precedent, but their contents are very different from the great inscriptions of Darius I, for instance, which glorify the emperor, catalogue his conquests, and enumerate the peoples and tribes under his sway. Aśoka's edicts are in the nature of official pronouncements of policy, and instructions to his officers and subjects. They contain many personal touches, and the drafts were probably written by the emperor himself.[156]

These edicts and the dharma they teach constitute a remarkable infusion of concern for the virtue and the welfare of people and even animals into the goals of government. John Strong has a nice summary of what these edicts say regarding dharma:

> However he intended [Dharma], in his edicts Aśoka seems to have been obsessed with Dharma. The Aśokan state was to be governed according to Dharma. The people were to follow Dharma. Wars of aggression were to be replaced by peaceful conquests of Dharma. Special royal ministers were charged with the propagation of Dharma. True delight in this world came only with delight in Dharma, and the old royal pleasure-tours and hunts were replaced by Dharma-pilgrimages.
>
> From these and other indications, we may say that Dharma seems to have meant for Aśoka a moral polity of active social concern, religious tolerance, ecological awareness, the observance of common ethical precepts, and the renunciation of war. In Pillar Edict VII, for example, he orders banyan trees and mango groves to be planted, resthouses to be built, and wells to be dug every half-mile along the roads. In Rock Edict I, he establishes an end to the killing and consumption of most animals in the royal kitchens. In Rock Edict II, he orders the provision of medical facilities for men and beasts. In Rock Edict III, he enjoins obedience to mother and father, generosity toward priests and ascetics, and frugality in spending. In Rock Edict V, he commissions officers to work for the welfare and happiness of the poor and aged. In Rock Edict VI, he declares his intention constantly to promote the welfare of all beings so as to pay off his debt to living creatures and to work for their happiness in this world and the next. And in Rock Edict XII, he honors men of all faiths.[157]

155. See Bongard-Levin, *Mauryan India*, 85; see also Thapar, *Aśoka*, 33–39. Thapar's suggestion that Aśoka would not have undertaken the military conquest of Kaliṅga after having "converted" to Buddhism is not persuasive. "The fact that he waged a war immediately after his conversion is no argument at all" (Eggermont, "Buddha's Mahāparinirvāṇa," 245). As Thapar herself points out, speaking of conversion to Buddhism is problematic. I also agree with Bongard-Levin's viewpoint that Aśoka's becoming a lay-Buddhist and the remorse he expressed after the Kaliṅga campaign did "not [cause him to] discard the traditional foreign policy of his predecessors" (see Bongard-Levin, *Mauryan India*, 84–85). Many of the interpretations of Aśoka's Edicts—what Bongard-Levin labels the "traditional approach" (ibid.)—take much too simple an approach to Aśoka, mainly by taking his words at face value. To some extent Nick Sutton's reading of Aśoka and Yudhiṣṭhira participates in this traditional approach (see "Aśoka and Yudhiṣṭhira"). For a sophisticated, probing examination of Aśoka and the Major Rock Inscriptions, see *Die grossen Felsen-Edikte Aśoka's*, edited and translated by Ulrich Schneider.

156. A. L. Basham, *The Wonder That Was India*, 53.

In my opinion Strong is wrong to say that Aśoka renounced war. The famous Twelfth Major Rock Edict, which speaks of his remorse over his bloody conquest of Kaliṅga, not only does not renounce war, it actually threatens war, although it does state at length the emperor's preference for peaceful conquest *(dhammavijaya)*.[158] As these points are critically important for our whole consideration of Aśoka, I quote this edict at length from Thapar's *Aśoka* (my initials distinguish my interpolations from Thapar's):

> When he had been consecrated eight years the Beloved of the Gods [Aśoka (jlf)], the king Piyadassi [Aśoka (jlf)] conquered Kaliṅga. A hundred and fifty thousand people were deported, a hundred thousand were killed and many times that number perished. Afterwards, now that Kaliṅga was annexed, the Beloved of the Gods very earnestly practised *Dhamma* [vernacular form of Sanskrit *dharma*, (jlf)], desired *Dhamma*, and taught *Dhamma*. On conquering Kaliṅga the Beloved of the Gods felt remorse, for, when an independent country is conquered the slaughter, death, and deportation of the people is extremely grievous to the Beloved of the Gods, and weighs heavily on his mind. What is even more deplorable to the Beloved of the Gods, is that those who dwell there, whether brahmans, *śramaṇas*, or those of other sects, or householders who show obedience to their superiors, obedience to mother and father, obedience to their teachers and behave well and devotedly towards their friends, acquaintances, colleagues, relatives, slaves, and servants—all suffer violence, murder, and separation from their loved ones. Even those who are fortunate to have escaped, and whose love is undiminished [by the brutalizing effect of war (RT)], suffer from misfortunes of their friends, acquaintances, colleagues, and relatives. This participation of all men in suffering, weighs heavily on the mind of the Beloved of the Gods. . . . If a hundredth or a thousandth part of those people who were killed or died or were deported when Kaliṅga was annexed were to suffer similarly, it would weigh heavily on the mind of the Beloved of the Gods.

157. Strong, *Legend of King Aśoka*, 4.

158. See Schneider's nice analysis of this complex text, *Die grossen Felsen-Edikte Aśoka's*, 172–76.

The Beloved of the Gods believes that one who does wrong should be forgiven as far as it is possible to forgive him. And the Beloved of the Gods conciliates the forest tribes of his empire, but he warns them that he has power even in his remorse, and he asks them to repent, lest they be killed. For the Beloved of the Gods wishes that all beings should be unharmed, self-controlled, calm in mind, and gentle. The Beloved of the Gods considers victory by *Dhamma* [*dhammavijaya* (jlf)] to be the foremost victory. And moreover the Beloved of the Gods has gained this victory on all his frontiers to a distance of six hundred *yojanas* [i.e., about 1,500 miles (RT)], where reigns the Greek king named Antiochus, and beyond the realm of that Antiochus in the lands of the four kings named Ptolemy, . . . and in the south over the Colas and Pāṇḍyas as far as Ceylon. Likewise here in the imperial territories among the Greeks and Kambojas, . . . everywhere people follow the Beloved of the Gods' instructions in *Dhamma*. Even where the envoys of the Beloved of the Gods have not gone, people hear of his conduct according to *Dhamma*, his precepts and his instruction in *Dhamma*, and they follow *Dhamma* and will continue to follow it.

What is obtained by this is victory everywhere, and everywhere victory is pleasant. This pleasure has been obtained through victory by *Dhamma*—yet it is but a slight pleasure, for the Beloved of the Gods only looks upon that as important in its results which pertains to the next world.

This inscription of *Dhamma* has been engraved so that any sons or great grandsons that I may have should not think of gaining new conquests, and in whatever victories they may gain should be satisfied with patience and light punishment. They should only consider conquest by *Dhamma* to be a true conquest, and delight in *Dhamma* should be their whole delight, for this is of value in both this world and the next.[159]

The most remarkable element in this edict is Aśoka's account of his grief over the Kaliṅga conquest. But it also contains a clear ultimatum directed at the "forest tribes" of the empire. Those peoples are to accept the peaceful conquest of Dharma *(dhammavijaya)*, which is "pleasant," or they can expect the same kind of travail the people of Kaliṅga suffered. The long description of the sufferings of the Kaliṅga conquest explain to one and all why the emperor favors *dhammavijaya* and why he is so devoted to nonviolence generally; however, not only does the edict fail to renounce violence, it threatens it explicitly as well as implicitly. It is true too that while Aśoka recommended forgiveness, he did not forgo judicial procedures and punishments—not even capital punishment.[160]

Many of us today find Aśoka's general outlook and these policies much

159. Thapar, *Aśoka*, 255–57.
160. See the Fourth Pillar Edict in Thapar, *Aśoka*, 263.

to our own liking,[161] but this appeal should not lead us to a romantic or overly idealistic interpretation of this emperor. Aśoka need not be seen as either a saintly forerunner of contemporary liberal democratic ideals or a cynical hypocrite. We can and should recognize the possibility that his edicts are both spiritually enlightened (by our criteria) and administratively astute.[162] But even within the middle ground between taking him at face value and reducing what he says to manipulative rhetoric, we must recognize that Aśoka's edicts represent a remarkably aggressive policy of attempting to shape the thinking and behavior of his subjects. There is a domineering and patronizing tone to many of Aśoka's edicts,[163] and on one occasion he was so bold as to instruct the Saṅgha regarding the works its members should read and study.[164] On another occasion he threatened with expulsion from the Saṅgha any monks or nuns who caused dissension.[165] He wrote on several occasions of a pluralistic approach toward the various religious organizations of the day, sometimes juxtaposing brahmins and *śramaṇas* (non-brahmin ascetics and thinkers), claiming to make gifts to various of them,[166] declaring that all groups were free to dwell anywhere they wished in the land,[167] and encouraging all to honor all sects, so that all sects might "advance their essential doctrines."[168] Part of the text of this latter edict is particularly significant in light of Aśoka's claims elsewhere to support a variety of religious sects:

> But the Beloved of the Gods [Aśoka] does not consider gifts or honour to be as important as the advancement of the essential doctrine of all sects. This progress of the essential doctrine takes many forms, but its basis is the control of one's speech, so as not to extol one's own sect or disparage another's on unsuitable occasions, or at least to do so only mildly on certain occasions. . . . Again, whosoever honours his own sect or disparages that of another man, wholly out of devotion to his own, with a view to showing it in a favourable light, harms his own sect even more seriously. Therefore, concord is to be commended, so that men may hear one another's principles and obey them.[169]

161. See the foreword and preface of the adapted translation and edition of *The Edicts of Aśoka*, by N. A. Nikam and Richard McKeon, a volume issued by the International Institute of Philosophy in a series entitled "Philosophy and World Community."
162. They are all the more astute when compared to the inscriptions of Darius I described by Basham in the passage quoted in the text above (see note 156 above).
163. In the "Second Separate Edict" we read: "All men are my children and just as I desire for my children that they should obtain welfare and happiness both in this world and the next, the same do I desire for all men." I quote Aśoka from the synthetic and smoothed out translation provided by Thapar in *Aśoka*, 258.
164. See the Minor Rock Inscription of Babhra (Thapar, *Aśoka*, 261).
165. See the so-called Schism Edict of Kauśambi-Pāṭaliputra-Sañci (Thapar, *Aśoka*, 262.)
166. See the Eighth Major Rock Edict (Thapar, *Aśoka*, 253).
167. See the Seventh Major Rock Edict (Thapar, *Aśoka*, 253).
168. See the Twelfth Major Rock Edict (Thapar, *Aśoka*, 255).
169. Thapar, *Aśoka*, 255. Generally the enemies of the Vedas and brahmins are not referred to by name in the *MBh;* usually they are referred to simply as *nāstika*, which I have

We know from Buddhist literature (e.g., the *Tevijja suttanta*)[170] and from the *Mahābhārata* some of the sorts of targets intended by this strong censure of religious speech in the name of religious diversity!

And while Aśoka was a Buddhist layman *(upāsaka)* and clearly partial to the general "modern" ethics of the Buddhist Saṅgha, he was, by the same token, not neutral toward Brahminic religious practices. He did forbid the killing of animals at sacrifices in the First Major Rock Edict, a prohibition that clearly embraced Vedic Brahminism, at least in principle (though it is difficult to say how common the *paśubandha* (animal sacrifice) might actually have been in 260 B.C.). He also forbade various unnamed festivals in the First Major Rock Edict and criticized and discouraged various rites in the Ninth Major Rock Edict. Some of both types of religious observances might well have been administered by brahmins. Many brahmins, however, probably felt this paternalism as an insult, for those who know the Vedas and teach dharma based on the Vedas do not regard themselves as the children of the ruler, but rather as the source of the ruler's wisdom, policy, and prosperity. And the seemingly genial pluralism would likewise have been unwelcome, for, as I pointed out above, such pluralism denied the hierarchy and the monopoly upon which Brahminism depended. The ruler's injury of failing to recognize the unique importance of brahmin claims was complemented by his giving equal honor to such "heathens." And the commands that all sects should be free to live anywhere must be seen as at least denying in principle the power of any group to exclude another group from certain general areas such as desirable *tīrthas* and groves—a dictum likely to impinge upon the older groups of brahmins more than upon the younger Jain and Buddhist monks. In addition the specific admonitions to "guard one's speech" that accompanied Aśoka's exhortation that all sects honor all other sects likely rankled brahmins all the more. In light of some of the criticism visited upon *nāstikas* in the *Mahābhārata*,[171] this warning might well apply to disgruntled brahmins, even to antecedent forms of the *Mahābhārata.*

It seems fair to conjecture that the emergence of the Mauryan empire generally and Aśoka's dharma campaign in particular were profound challenges to many pious brahmins, and that these events may well have been a strong stimulus to the creation, development, redaction, and spreading of the apocalyptic *Mahābhārata* narrative.[172] This narrative

tried to render consistently as "Naysayer" in the translation, but which I believe often has similar connotations to "heathen." Who are the 88,000 wayward brahmins affiliated with the Asuras whom Vyāsa described as "jackals" at 12.34.17? Regarding them, Vyāsa continued, "Wicked men who want to do away with Law, who promote what is contrary to Law, should be killed the way the overbearing Daityas were killed by the Gods" (12.34.18).

170. See *Buddhist Suttas*, translated by T. W. Rhys Davids, 157–203.

171. See *MBh* 12.34.13–18 for a particularly chilling expression of hatred.

172. My argument in this introduction obviously sides broadly with earlier discussions of a "Hindu Renaissance," which interpret various developments in nascent "Hinduism" late in

depicted violent resistance to the kind of "illegitimate" political power that the Nandas, the Mauryans, and Aśoka must have represented to some, and it depicted a restoration of proper, *brāhmaṇya* kingship, which undertakes to use violence for the protection and support of brahmins.[173] The last Mauryan emperor, Bṛhadratha, was overthrown by his brahmin general Puṣyamitra Śuṅga in 187 or 185 B.C.[174] This deed established the Śuṅga dynasty at Paṭaliputra over the already weakened Mauryan empire, and it saw ten rulers across 112 years.[175] Puṣyamitra vigorously defended the empire against Mauryan loyalists and Greek invaders, and he was famous for centuries as a ruler who performed two Horse Sacrifices and reinstituted and patronized brahmin sacrifices generally. He is also famous in some Buddhist sources for having persecuted and killed Buddhists, but after reviewing these accounts, the eminent historian Étienne Lamotte concludes, "Puṣyamitra must be acquitted for insufficient evidence."[176]

the first millennium as, in some measure, reactions against the rise of Buddhism. I think, however, that such discussions have tended to be cast too simply in terms of brahmin versus Buddhist, oversimplifying these people in terms of doctrinal formulations alone, not attending to the broader social and political goods at stake. I would say the reaction seems to have been less against Buddhism and more against the various social, political, economic, and cultural transformations brought about by the rise of empires that "stepped out" on the brahmin elite. What I think is most significant for *some* brahmins during these times are the real and symbolic decreases in the prestige and power of brahmins (*die Entmachtung der Brahmanen*, as Angelika Malinar puts it in a brief summary of this issue in *Rājavidyā: Das königliche Wissen um Herrschaft und Verzicht*, her probing examination of the *BhG* in its historical and literary context, 439–40). Haraprasad Shastri summed up many of the brahmin grievances in a too brief and oversimplified way in a paper entitled "Causes of the Dismemberment of the Maurya Empire." I agree with Bongard-Levin's judgment of Shastri's argument: it was "right when he referred to the reaction of the Brāhmaṇas as a reason for the decline of the state of the Mauryas, although, on the whole, Sastri's [*sic*] characterisation of the emperor's policy as anti-Brāhmanic is incorrect" (*Mauryan India*, 100). Romila Thapar's point-by-point rebuttal of Shastri's views (*Aśoka and the Decline of the Mauryas*, 197–203) points out certain factual mistakes, but it evades the clear implications of a number of points of the Brahminic principles of culture, society, and polity and is not persuasive. What I write below tries to specify and qualify what I think are the most fundamental and important goods (and injuries) that led, I believe, *some* brahmins to launch a counterattack that proved tremendously creative in a multitude of ways, even as it wished to be, and was, profoundly conservative in certain ways.

173. I sketched some of these ideas in "The Great Epic of India as Religious Rhetoric" in 1983, and Georg von Simson wrote in "The Mythic Background of the *Mahābhārata*," "I believe that the main redaction of the *MBh* is to be understood as a reaction of orthodox Brahminical circles against the religious policies of the Mauryas" (223). Von Simson adduces some interesting pieces of evidence to suggest that the redactors of this ideological *MBh* saw Dhṛtarāṣṭra as a representation of Aśoka (220; an improvement upon the old suggestion of A. Holtzmann Jr. that Duryodhana was originally a representation of Aśoka). These considerations only strengthen my argument that Yudhiṣṭhira is the epic-redactors' anti-Aśoka.

174. The earlier date is given by Étienne Lamotte, *Histoire du Bouddhisme Indien*, 388; the later date by Kulke and Rothermund, *A History of India*, 68.

175. See Lamotte, *Histoire*, 388. According to Pāṇini the Śuṅgas were descendants of the seer Bharadvāja, as was the famous brahmin weapons-master of the *MBh*, Droṇa (ibid., 389). The Śuṅgas were succeeded in paramountcy in northern India by another brahmin dynasty, the Kāṇvas, whose four rulers reigned from 75 B.C. to 30 B.C. (ibid., 388).

176. Ibid., 430.

But even if innocent of wholesale violence against Buddhists, Puṣyamitra represented a significant reversal of the imperial posture toward brahmins and brahmin religious institutions.[177]

If one reads the *Mahābhārata* along the lines I have been suggesting, it may seem that the narrative of a divinely led purge of the *kṣatra* and the reinstitution of proper *brāhmaṇya* rule fits the tenor of the Śuṅga revolution very well; it might well have been a myth inspired by, or even chartering, these political events. I have no doubt that the Śuṅga revolution contributed a great deal to the development of our *MBh;* however, one very important trait of the *MBh* does not fit with the Śuṅga era and may be a reaction against it. I refer to the critically important insistence in the *MBh* upon rule being appropriate to kṣatriyas and not brahmins. The *MBh* is a Brahminic text which, particularly in its repudiation of some aspects of the brahmin seer Rāma Jāmadagnya's repeated avenging slaughter of kṣatriyas,[178] calls for kṣatriya kingship operating under Brahminic supervision to guarantee the preservation and welfare of brahmins. The ultimate credibility of brahmins as a religious elite depended upon their disassociating themselves from the direct cruelties of governing, and so the *MBh* works to correct this excess of the Śuṅgas and Kāṇvas. For these reasons, I have suggested that the first major written Sanskrit redaction of the *MBh* was post-Śuṅga and post-Kāṇva as well as post-Mauryan. For now, I see integral connections between the epic's narrative of apocalyptic purge and its demand for kṣatriya kingship, so I put this redaction of the *MBh* sometime late in or shortly after the era of the post-Mauryan brahmin rulers of the empire and its dissolved elements.

Regardless of its relation to the actual events and the religious and social politics of Nandan, Mauryan, and post-Mauryan times, the *MBh* is a tremendously violent, apocalyptic narrative, and the mere sketching out of this story severely challenged the basic thrust of the newer senses of dharma. The *MBh* challenges the philosophies of yoga and *ahiṃsā* both by telling stories of armed resistance to abusive power and of restorative warfare—often without any expressions of disapproval—and also by arguing the rightness and necessity of such violence, especially in *The Laws for Kings.* Thus this narrative solution, whether real or imagined, posed a second crisis for any and all brahmins strongly sensitized to the newer values of dharma. While the violent resistance and the final purge depicted in the *Bhārata* probably appealed strongly to some brahmins (such men as might have found the saga of Rāma Jāmadagnya most gratifying), it must have posed a deep crisis of conscience for many others (men represented

177. It is important to observe, however, that Buddhists and Jains, far from being eliminated by hostile rulers, flourished during this time in significant ways; see the tally of Lamotte (ibid., 424).

178. See Fitzgerald, "Rāma Jāmadagnya Thread."

well by Vasiṣṭha's response to Kalmāṣapāda's horrific assault on his sons, or by the ancestors of Aurva).[179]

Hence the "double-crisis." The events which provoked some to imagine this bloody purge make up the first; the imagination of that bloody purge itself constitutes the second. The *Mahābhārata* had two fundamental agendas: to assert its narrative of a purge and restoration, and to find ways to resolve the conflicts between the grotesque, sanctioned violence of this narrative and the newer values of dharma that were well established among brahmins and becoming prevalent throughout much of north Indian society in the latter third of the first millennium B.C.

Narrative Representations of the Crisis of Dharma in the Mahābhārata

Narrative evidence in the *Mahābhārata* suggests that its main apocalyptic vision grew from a deep sense of rage and inner conflict. Besides the "brahmin-abuse" stories already mentioned, the narrative describes the earth as populated by armed rulers who neglected dharma in the older senses of the word—that is, they neglected the Vedas, the nurture of the Gods with Vedic rites, and the support of the men who knew dharma and who knew and used the Vedas. The epic's depiction of this oppressive *kṣatra* also portrays kṣatriyas as regularly violating the newer sensibilities of dharma as well—they are frequently depicted as arrogant louts drunk on lust, rage, delusion, and other vices. The *Mahābhārata,* as indicated earlier,[180] tells a story of the elimination of demonically construed kṣatriyas, one that follows upon and refines Rāma Jāmadagnya's twenty-one earlier wholesale slaughters of kṣatriyas, one that is narrated within an account of Janamejaya's assault upon serpents, and one that includes several other such prefigurings of the epic's main action.[181] I have already mentioned the different responses of Rāma Jāmadagnya and Vasiṣṭha to serious injuries inflicted upon them by kṣatriyas, and a survey of the epic's many stories of brahmins abused at the hands of kṣatriyas would amplify and deepen the evidence that deep and bitter political rage is at the center of the *Mahābhārata.*

The attempt to integrate the epic's tremendously violent main narrative and the senses of justification and right upon which it rests with the ethics of yoga and *ahiṃsā* seems to have occasioned a profound tension regarding dharma in many of those who contributed to the project of the *Mahābhārata* over the time of its active development. This tension is expressed in the narrative with a number of deeply ambivalent or contradictory representations of dharma. The *tristesse* of the brahmin Skinny's fusion of the two dharmas into one persona joins a number of other images and narratives within the *Mahābhārata* that demonstrate this tension on the

179. See above, note 105.

180. See the third paragraph of the introduction to *The Book of the Women.*

181. See Christopher Minkowski, "Snakes, *Sattras,* and the *Mahābhārata.*"

part of its authors and redactors. Here I may give only a few brief indications of this rich and extensive theme.

Dharma plays an anthropomorphically represented role in the narrative on a number of occasions. He is incarnate as Pāṇḍu's brother Vidura; he is the father of Yudhiṣṭhira Pāṇḍava, and he turns up in the narrative a number of times, often in disguise to test someone's character in terms of the newer values. On many of these occasions, one of the main motives of the story is to argue some point of the newer, socially sensitive ethic. One of the fascinating elements of many of Dharma's narrative appearances in the *Mahābhārata* is his association with death. As has been generally known for some time, and as Madeleine Biardeau has admirably demonstrated and explained at some length in connection with the some of the basic symbolism of the epic, there is also an assimilation of the God Dharma and Yama, the Lord of the Dead, in the *Mahābhārata*.[182] Dharma and Yama often seem to be the same in some of the stories of Dharma's appearances (especially in the story of Aṇī Māṇḍavya; see below), and Dharma and Yama converge in the figure of Dharma's son Yudhiṣṭhira.

Yama constantly lurks in the background of this tale of a murderous blaze within a tale of a murderous blaze. Yama is the deity most often associated with the general destruction depicted in the *Mahābhārata*.[183] One of the principal ways that Yama is invoked in the *Mahābhārata* is through Yudhiṣṭhira's association with him. Yudhiṣṭhira, the son of Dharma, shares with Yama the epithet of Dharmarāja. And Yudhiṣṭhira too, the man who undertook to become the Over-King through the Rājasūya, the Royal Consecration rite of *The Book of the Assembly* (an ambition the interruption of which constitutes the narrative ground of the war) presides over the hatching of the war and the war itself as a brooding Lord of Death. Yudhiṣṭhira is also a Lord of Death as a king, the one man among men who holds the power of life and death (represented typically with the opposed pair *nigraha*, "restraint," and *anugraha*, "encouragement"), the wielder of the rod of force (*daṇḍa*, an emblem of Yama),[184] made actual and concrete principally in the king's power of punishment and his army. And he is so too as the consecrated sacrificer of the epic's great sacrifice of battle. These images of king and Lord of Death, of Dharmarāja (the judge

182. See E. W. Hopkins, *Epic Mythology*, 115, and Sukumari Bhattacharji, *The Indian Theogony*, 55–62. Biardeau's discussion is in *EMH* 5: 95 ff., 160 ff.

183. See Lynn Thomas, "The Identity of the Destroyer in the Mahābhārata." The basic notion of the catastrophic violence of the *Mahābhārata* often came to be seen in terms of the notion of the dissolution of the world at the end of a cosmic span of time (*pralaya*). And often "the Great God" (Mahādeva) Śiva came to be seen as the ultimate divine president of the violence and destruction of the Bhārata war. But these are, I believe, later, more cosmically systemic reinterpretations of the earlier, more adventitious, more disturbing uses of sacrificial fire for murderous revenge that are more fundamental to the text.

184. See *EMH* 5: 161.

who scrutinizes the deeds of men and points out their fates), are aptly synthesized in the epic narrative with the figure of the *kaṅka*, the stork, which seems ultimately not distinct from the heron.[185] During the mandatory year of going incognito in the kingdom of the Matsyas as guests of King Virāṭa (the Sanskrit word *matsya* means "fish"), Yudhiṣṭhira assumed the ironic guise of dicing master and the name Kaṅka, "Heron-Stork," which is not ironic, but a declaration of one aspect of his ordinarily veiled nature. The heron was infamous among some in ancient India as a vicious killer that deceitfully lulled its prey into a false sense of security by its long, patient, utter stillness—the "heron's way" (*bakavṛtti* or *bakavrata*).[186] "Looking down, cruel, firmly committed to realizing his own good, deceitful, and falsely polite": that, says Manu, is "a brahmin who follows the heron's way" and is bound for hell.[187] This describes the heron's stealthy hunting in ponds and wetlands where its most preferred food is fish, *matsyas*, and it can also be seen as one possible criticism (an unfair one, its defenders in the *MBh* would say) of the narrow selfishness of dharma done simply as Meritorious Good Deed for oneself alone. During this year as the *kaṅka* lurking stealthily among the *matsyas*, the Dharmarāja's underlying nature as a cruel Lord of Death was clearly indicated by Vyāsa. And as we saw several times in *The Book of the Women*, after the war was over and Prajāpati's altar (Kurukṣetra) was littered with the bodies of the dead, the most prominent figure out there was the five-to-six-foot-tall *kaṅka*, the adjutant stork, feeding upon the flesh of the dead, vying with the women of the dead for the warriors' remains. Yudhiṣṭhira has long been regarded by literary critics as the most uniform and boringly predictable of the three main Pāṇḍavas. In fact his character is more complex and interesting than almost any other figure of the epic.[188]

Perhaps the most notable of all the stories of Dharma's appearances in the *Mahābhārata* is the Pāṇḍavas' encounter with him as a dangerous, riddling, local spirit (a *yakṣa*) in the body of a *baka* (heron, crane, stork) at the threshold between their twelve years of forest residence and their year of being incognito,[189] a time which is both a death and a gestation for

185. Nor, it seems, is the stork distinct either from the *baka* (sometimes *sārasa*), the crane, as a long-legged, long-beaked bird feeding in fields and wetlands. It was Biardeau who first called attention to the connection of these birds as figures of death in the *MBh*; see *EMH* 5: 96–99, 106–10.

186. See Manu 4.30, 192, and 197. The behavior described as *bakavṛtti* fits the heron. It seems that the word *baka* applies to cranes (along with *sārasa*); *baka* and *kaṅka* both apply to herons: and *kaṅka* applies to herons and the carrion-eating adjutant stork, *Leptopilos dubius*. See my "Some Storks and Eagles Eat Carrion; Herons and Ospreys Do Not."

187. Manu 4.196.

188. As I indicated above (see notes 36 and 37), Yudhiṣṭhira's complexity has not escaped everyone's attention.

189. As Hans van Buitenen frequently pointed out, twelve is a representation of unity because the year consists of twelve months.

them. In this episode[190] the disguised Dharma laid each of the four younger Pāṇḍavas down in death (they had come to his lake to drink, one by one, and each had refused to acknowledge the lake as the *baka's* property and answer his questions before drinking); at last Dharma's son, Yudhiṣṭhira (his counterpart in death and virtue both, who would soon take on his own disguise as the bird of death, the *kaṅka*) arrived, paid the *baka* proper heed as the owner of the lake, showed nimble wit by answering his many riddles, and then demonstrated magnanimity with kindness and generosity.[191] Yudhiṣṭhira's actions led his brothers back to life and secured the guarantee from Dharma, the God of "Firm Continuity," that he and his brothers would survive the incognito year successfully.

Dharma was present at the very end of the entire story when Yudhiṣṭhira once again served as psychopomp, that is, "conductor of the dead," leading his family to heaven on the Great Journey, during which they dropped dead one by one, starting with Draupadī.[192] Here Dharma trailed in the form of a dog, a despised animal, testing Yudhiṣṭhira once again, to see if the king was truly loyal to his followers. Yudhiṣṭhira, the only Pāṇḍava alive at the end of the journey to heaven, was invited to mount a chariot to travel the final distance to heaven, but he refused because the loyal and devoted dog could not accompany him. Yudhiṣṭhira passed the test by demonstrating the new-dharma value of loyalty to his devotees, and they all gained heaven.

In other stories too, Dharma's cheery and progressive values are shadowed by atavistic death. For example, in "The Story of the Ungrateful Brahmin," Dharma is present again as a *baka*, the "King of Cranes," with the name of Nāḍījaṅgha and the title of Rājadharma, "King Dharma."[193] The King of Cranes, Nāḍījaṅgha, was the direct offspring of the Progenitor Kaśyapa, and a dear friend of Rākṣasas.[194] In this instance Dharma offered a fallen, greedy brahmin unstinting hospitality (and—simple expression of the old function of dharma—set him up to be honored, fed, and given a great wealth of gold) and was repaid with the brahmin's murdering him to have his flesh as viaticum. The ungrateful brahmin was tracked down and executed by the Rākṣasas, but no being would eat his flesh, not even carrion-feeders, not even worms. The mother of cows, Surabhi, then

190. The episode occurs at the very end of *The Book of the Forest*, *MBh* 3.295–99, van Buitenen, 2: 795–807.

191. In most of the appearances of Dharma as a character in the *MBh*, both the older and the newer senses of dharma are usually present, and death is involved. The newer values of dharma are usually indicated clearly; the older typically involve some kind of significant acquisition made available by the character of Dharma. In this instance, the good sought—and presided over by Dharma—is water, and the four younger Pāṇḍavas suffer death because they fail to heed Dharma's stipulations about taking water. Yudhiṣṭhira's unexpected and supererogatory generosity is obviously the expression of the newer sense of dharma.

192. See *MBh* 17.3.

193. At *MBh* 12.162–7, the final text of *Law in Times of Distress*.

194. *MBh* 12.163.19, and so on. For Kaśyapa, see the LCP.

appeared over Nāḍījaṅgha's funeral pyre and revived him by dripping milk upon him.

To conclude this brief tour, I mention a different sort of Dharma-story, one in which the figure of Dharma himself is not ambivalent (in fact here he consistently represents what must be one of the constitutive ideas of dharma as "firm connection," "rigid continuity," "firm holding"[195]). This story explains Dharma's birth from a śūdra mother as Vidura. Dharma was the harsh judge who insisted that the ascetic Aṇī Māṇḍavya's crime as a boy be requited by a punishment that fit that crime precisely.[196] The boy had skewered insects with the shafts of reeds and grasses, so as an adult he was sentenced to execution by impalement (though not really guilty of any criminal offense). The sage did not die upon the stake, but when he did come before Dharma (who is clearly Yama, the Lord of the Dead, here), he criticized Dharma for making his punishment conform too precisely, hold too firmly, to the wrong he did as a child. The sameness of crime and punishment did not take into account the more subjective fact that Māṇḍavya was just a boy when he tortured the insects. Māṇḍavya cursed Dharma to live a life as a śūdra and declared that deeds done by people younger than fourteen would not be punished.

Part of the indictment the authors of the *MBh* are making against rulers is that dharma had become persistently weak. This is one of the reasons behind Dharma's being incarnate in the epic narrative as the wise Vidura, who often advocated the newer virtues of dharma but was generally ignored by the Kauravas as a long-winded obstructionist. In the case of Yudhiṣṭhira, the son of Dharma, the conflict in the notion of dharma as an ideal is evident at the foundation of his character. The Dharmarāja is repeatedly said to be *dharmātman*, "always mindful of Law," or "always mindful of what is Right," but, as noted earlier, Yudhiṣṭhira is more than once enmeshed in issues where truthfulness or identity is seriously compromised in one way or another.[197] Yudhiṣṭhira's troubles reflect the profound dilemma of dharma that the *Mahābhārata* addresses from beginning to end, as Madeleine Biardeau has pointed out so well.[198]

195. See Halbfass, "*Dharma* in the Self-Understanding of Traditional Hinduism," 314–20.

196. See *MBh* 1.101, van Buitenen, 1: 237–38.

197. See the first paragraph of the section "The Build-up of *Śoka* in the Wake of the War" in the first part of this introduction.

198. See parts 4 and 5 of her *EMH*, some of the essential points of which have been briefly made in her short paper, "The Salvation of the King in the *Mahābhārata*." As noted above, some of the themes just treated have been discussed at length in Biardeau's writings, and these discussions have opened up new avenues of interpretation of the *Mahābhārata*. Readers may see, however, that I am, at least in principle, much more concerned than she is with matters of history. Where Biardeau sees in the *Mahābhārata* some instance of a unified epic-*purāṇic* cosmogony and theology, I see it as situated in particular circumstances, as a pragmatic utterance which certain agents used to some advantage. I also see it as having a diachronic history—that is, as containing within it various later developments of some of its own earlier formulations. In this regard, I disagree with her taking the *BhG* as a sufficient

The basic ambivalence of dharma is, in part, behind the character of Yudhiṣṭhira and the anguish with which he wages war and weighs the ethical burden of kingship afterwards.[199]

Yudhiṣṭhira's Schooling in the Fundamentals of Kingship

The *Mahābhārata* presents the political response of some brahmin-inspired community to political developments in north India from the mid-fourth century to the early or middle second century B.C. Puṣyamitra accomplished the actual deed of reinstating some kind of *brāhmaṇya* rule atop the old Māgadhan empire, and the *Mahābhārata* provided the narratives and the credible argumentation to challenge the principles of the Aśokan polity and society and replace them with a newly re-legitimized *varṇāśramadharma.* The narrative argument depicting the ethically ambivalent Yudhiṣṭhira, having him lead a purge of the *kṣatra,* and then making him a proper *brāhmaṇya* king is central to the entire *MBh* as it now

representation of the *Mahābhārata's* resolution of the king's dilemma, showing him how "every sort of impurity could be sacralised and turned into svadharma" ("The Salvation of the King in the *Mahābhārata,*" 97). I think there are important indications of historical development on this issue in the *MBh,* as I point out later on. More fundamentally, Biardeau sees the concept of dharma in the *Mahābhārata*—as a whole—as infused with the perspectives and values of renouncers, including, most importantly, ideas of *ahiṃsā.* As I have indicated above in discussing the growing "bipolarity" of dharma, I see this as an important, relatively new, sense of the word in the *Mahābhārata;* but I also see the fundamental sense of the word (and the actual majority of instances of the word in the epic) as rooted in the old Vedic concepts of *karman.*

199. In writing of the juxtaposition of righteousness to the *kṣatradharma* inscribed in the character of Rāma Dāśaratha, Sheldon Pollock, in his introduction to his translation of the *Ayodhyākāṇḍa,* astutely observes that Yudhiṣṭhira presents a similar ambivalence regarding dharma (see Goldman, ed., *Rāmāyaṇa,* 2: 68). But Pollock does not see how fundamental and important this ambivalence is to the figure of Yudhiṣṭhira. Quite correctly seeing that Yudhiṣṭhira's reliance upon the newer valuations of dharma based on yoga and *ahiṃsā* is partly a *pūrvapakṣa* (a preliminary presentation of an issue which lays the groundwork for the final resolution, the *siddhānta*) for the *siddhānta* that the *MBh's* authors present in the *ŚP,* Pollock fails to see the depth of the ambivalence programmed into Yudhiṣṭhira by his literary creators. When Pollock says that these newer dharma traits are "not consistent and constitutive aspects of his portrait," he has not gone far enough, for the very bipolarity of Yudhiṣṭhira's sense of dharma is constitutive of his character, and that bipolarity, or ambivalence, is a recurrent feature of his portrait. Nick Sutton's argument that Yudhiṣṭhira is directly patterned upon Aśoka's exemplary assertion of the newer dharma errs by failing to note any of the inconsistency, that is, fundamental ambivalence, in the epic's deliberate characterization of Yudhiṣṭhira. Sutton writes, "Analysis of the character and behaviour of Yudhiṣṭhira shows that he acts consistently in accordance with the [pervasively virtuous and nonviolent] understanding of dharma outlined in . . . the Edicts which Aśoka apparently also used as his rule of life" ("Aśoka and Yudhiṣṭhira," 338). This monochromatic characterization of Yudhiṣṭhira ignores too much of his actual behavior. It leads Sutton to ignore Yudhiṣṭhira's capitulation to Vyāsa and Kṛṣṇa Vāsudeva and his "owning up to the war" (which, as I explain below, is my interpretation of the eldest Pāṇḍava's name) by becoming the consecrated king of the Bharatas. This reading of Yudhiṣṭhira also ignores many of the other complexities in his character that I have pointed out or alluded to.

stands. The divinely led purge of the earth's kṣatriyas narrated in the epic had to lead to the installation of a king with the knowledge, the character, and the disposition to rule according to proper *brāhmaṇya* principles—in short, the senior son of Pāṇḍu, the new Pṛthu (see immediately below).

In the narrative and didactic *Book of Peace* the epic's authors present their resolutions of the tensions between different senses of dharma and offer their own political philosophy in response to the Nandas and the Mauryas, and particularly to Aśoka.[200] Bhīṣma's *praśamana-anuśāsana* (pacifying instruction) in dharma—*rājadharma, āpaddharma,* and *mokṣadharma*—is the brahmin-inspired community's answer to the heathen emperor's dharma campaign.[201] Fundamental to the *MBh's* resolution of the competing claims of yoga and *ahiṃsā* on the one hand and the use of violent force on the other, is the epic's arguing that there must be a radical distinction in the dharma of brahmins on the one hand (for them the highest dharma is *ahiṃsā*) and of kṣatriyas on the other (for them the use of force is the basic dharma).[202] Brahmins alone shall pursue the highest values of the new dharma, and they are to be supported in that by kings and the rest of society, for whom the new dharma applies in real but qualified ways. The figure of Yudhiṣṭhira, the new king, being calmed and quieted as he listened to those instructions in the wake of his vigorous efforts to disown the war and the kingship it brought is the epic's answer to the person of Aśoka.[203] The affirmation of both the old and new forms of

200. I have no doubt that some substantial part of the *nīti* advice of *The Laws for Kings* and *Law in Times of Distress* comes from earlier times, perhaps some of it even from the late Vedic era. But more important than these individual components is the collection made of them for some particular purpose. It is that purposeful collection I refer to when I write of *The Laws for Kings* or *The Book of Peace.*

201. It bears repeating that, though Aśoka and the other Mauryan emperors espoused a modern sort of religious pluralism that included brahmins and patronized and supported some brahmins, they had violated fundamental brahmin sensibilities, which must certainly have rankled other brahmins and some brahmin-sympathizers deeply. These embittered men, I would say, are responsible for formulating the more aggressive responses of the *MBh* to these perceived violations.

202. See the citation of the Ruru story above in note 139.

203. In 1980 I wrote that "the parallels between the situations of Yudhiṣṭhira and Aśoka, and the contrast at the *doctrinal* level . . . between the non-violent and renunciatory ideology of Buddhism and the deliberate Hindu sanctioning of violence for *dharmic* ends and the Hindu attempts to synthesize the renunciatory perspectives of *mokṣa* with the material and social processes of society (in the *āśramadharma* and the *karmayoga*) make it difficult not to see the *MBh* making some reply to the Buddhist pretense of having an adequate definition of the role of the emperor" (Fitzgerald, *The Mokṣa Anthology of the Great Bhārata,* 151). I went further than this and suggested a direct connection between Yudhiṣṭhira's escaping *śoka* and Aśoka's having done so in a paper read at the 1982 meeting of the Association of Asian Studies in Chicago ("*śānti,* the *Śānti Parvan,* and the Rhetoric of *śānti* in the *Great Bhārata* of Vyāsa"). Recently Nick Sutton ("Aśoka and Yudhiṣṭhira") has developed this connection rather differently than I have—our basic conceptions of Yudhiṣṭhira are radically different (see note 199 above)—though I fully agree with him when he writes that "the controversy raised by [the Emperor Aśoka's] approach to kingship . . . may underlie the epic debate on

dharma that constitutes his very character—shaped in part by his brothers and their wife, refined and instructed by Vyāsa and other brahmins, and schooled by Bhīṣma—represents the *Mahābhārata*'s synthesis of what was intended to be a credible dharma of kingship, something Aśoka had failed to articulate.[204] Using the ingeniously designed figure of the ambivalent king Yudhiṣṭhira, the authors of the epic asserted a political and social philosophy that reaffirmed—against Yudhiṣṭhira's now quelled and refuted doubts—the importance of deeds (Meritorious Good Deeds, dharma in the older sense of the word) on the part of the king and all in society, underscored the use of *principled* violence (that is violence carried out in accordance with dharma), both within and without the realm, as essential among the dharmas of the king, and at the same time found an important place for the newer values of dharma that were based on the worldview of yoga and *ahiṃsā*.

The Brahmin Myth of Kingship: The Making of King Pṛthu

As Hartmut Scharfe has pointed out, *The Laws for Kings* is relatively "more conceptual and less technical" than the *Arthaśāstra*,[205] and, as the map of the collection in the next section will indicate, two of the major conceptual themes that dominate its discussions of kingship and kingly technique are (1) an ambivalence about the use of violence, often expressed by recommending the judicious alternation of harshness and mildness, warfare and negotiation, punishment and encouragement,[206] and (2) the symbiotic relationship between the *kṣatra* and the *brahman*, in which the latter provides knowledge, direction, and legitimacy and the former power, deeds, and protection.[207] In addition to these two broad themes, there run through many of Bhīṣma's lessons exhortations to the king to cultivate various new dharma virtues such as self-control, generosity, kindness, patience, and similar attitudes and habits. Violence is grounded in the need for protection from external enemies and from domestic criminals (and occasionally in the need to seize goods in order to survive[208]), and the protection of brahmins and their status, position, and holdings is particularly stressed.[209] The blending of new dharma virtues with these old dharma deeds is the brahmin tradition's temporary resolution of the seemingly intractable bipolarity of dharma forced upon it by Aśoka and renouncers both Brahminic and *nāstika*.

These points are made in various texts throughout the collection, as mentioned, and a few texts present them together in a coherent way. One of the most important general texts on kingship in the entire collection—the story of the brahmins' making Vena's son Pṛthu at 12.59—expresses almost all of these points together nicely. This story is particularly important for the *Mahābhārata* as a whole as well as for the issues of kingship and ethics we have been following, and I will present it in detail. The myth of Pṛthu is very near the beginning of Bhīṣma's instructions,[210] and it is the first major statement of kingly philosophy in them. This lesson has a broad symbolic application to the political history I have been pointing to, and it also may serve as a broad guide to the basic narrative of the *MBh.* It provides, in embryonic form, the basic model of Brahminic polity and partially describes the epic's synthesis of old and new dharma in the king. Bhīṣma told this story when Yudhiṣṭhira asked the fundamental question, "What is a king?" and it is clear that Bhīṣma intended that Yudhiṣṭhira model himself after the pious and glorious Pṛthu.

On the morning of the first full day of the instructional session

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dharma centering on the character of Yudhiṣṭhira" (334). See below in "Yudhiṣṭhira's Embrace of *Kṣatradharma* against Aśoka's *Ahiṃsā*."

204. Sheldon Pollock, in the introduction to his translation of the *Ayodhyākāṇḍa*, discusses the opposition between *kṣatradharma* and the newer values of dharma as a "politically incapacitating bifurcation of *dharma*" to which "the characterization of Rāma [Dāśaratha] seems to be a response" (see Goldman, ed., *Rāmāyaṇa*, 2: 70). I would agree, and I would suggest that there is a historical dialectic at work in which both Yudhiṣṭhira and Rāma Dāśaratha (and perhaps aspects of the development of Kṛṣṇa Vāsudeva too) were responses to Aśoka, with Rāma perhaps a refinement of Yudhiṣṭhira in some ways. I argue in the next section that the *Śāntiparvan's* resolution of the opposition between older and newer values of dharma is based on an infusion of the old *kṣatradharma* with a sense of inner restraint (*niyama*), which—besides having some elements of the obvious about it—was strongly endorsed as dharma by the developing traditions of yoga. This infusion may be hypothesized to be an intermediate stage between Aśoka's seemingly blithe affirmation of both *ahiṃsā* and warfare (see below), and the "transvaluation" of the *kṣatradharma* that Pollock argues Rāma Dāśaratha represents (ibid., 69–73).

205. Scharfe, *The State in Indian Tradition*, 215.

206. The *Rājadharmaparvan* addresses the issue of kingly violence directly in several individual texts (e.g., in admonitions to be both mild and harsh right at the outset in 12.56 and elsewhere). But it does so most importantly in a series of texts surrounding the direct treatment of armies and warfare. The core texts dealing directly with armies and warfare occur at 12.99–103. Just prior to that core, immediately following the general statement on kingship contained in the Song of Utathya at 12.91–92, there is a set of texts that discuss various aspects of the king's use of violence or his making conquests by nonviolent means. Four texts between 12.93 and 12.98 discuss limitations and qualifications of the king's use of physical force. Following 12.103 there are two texts on the theme of conquering one's enemy by indirect means (basically Aśoka's theme of *dharmavijaya*).

207. This theme occurs in different forms in many particular passages, and it is the subject of a set of eight texts forming a section of Bhīṣma's instruction from 12.72 to12.79. It is also a major theme in several other statements found here and there concerning kingship.

208. The vigorous justification of conquest as a legitimate source of prosperity that Arjuna voices in 12.8 is not met anywhere else in the collection (see 12.98.4 for a mild reference to it), but the legitimacy of such conquest is taken for granted. Much advice is given to the *vijigīṣu* king ("the king seeking victory, or conquest," the "king on the warpath").

209. The protection of brahmins is of course the real crux of the idea of *varṇadharma*. The armed members of society exist by virtue of inequalities of power, and the rest of the population automatically sorts itself out into the various strata of producers and traders who are protected by the armed class as long as they are productive. The long-term survival of an unarmed class of people living upon the intellectual and spiritual contributions they make depends entirely upon persuading the armed (and moneyed) classes of their value. On the necessity of violence for the preservation of such hierarchy, see above at note 125.

210. It may represent an early beginning of the collection; see below in "Reading the Map of Bhīṣma's Instructions on Kingship."

Yudhiṣṭhira started off with an eloquent statement of the question, "What is a king?"

> How is it one man stands over other men of preeminent understanding, and men who are mighty warriors, when he has the same hands, head, and neck, . . . the same back, arms, and belly, . . . experiences birth and death the same; who is the same in all the attributes of men? How is it one man protects the entire earth that teems with strong men, mighty warriors, and noble men? And how is it the whole world wants to please this one man? For when this one man is pleased, the entire world is pleased—and when he is in turmoil, the whole world is in turmoil, that's a fact. Surely, the reason the whole world bows down to a single man as to a God can be no trifle.[211]

Bhīṣma first recited a complex history of the origins of kingship, and then he inventoried a massive treatise on government composed by Brahmā and abridged by Śiva, then by Indra, then by Bṛhaspati and Śukra, the brahmin political advisors, respectively, of the Gods and of the Asuras.[212] Bhīṣma then took up the history of the son of Vena, Pṛthu: "The Gods told Viṣṇu, 'Designate the one who is worthy to be superior to other mortals.' "[213] Then, "the blessed one, the lord God Nārāyaṇa thought deeply and created from his mind a son of dazzling fiery energy, Virajas. But Virajas did not want to be a lord upon the earth; his mind was inclined toward renunciation."[214] And Virajas's son and grandson were likewise more inclined to asceticism than rule. But then his great grandson Anaṅga was "a righteous protector of his subjects and an expert in the policy for administering the rod of force."[215]

> Then "Anaṅga's son Atibala ["too mighty"] became adept in governing and succeeded to the rule of the earth, but he was dominated by his senses. The mind-born daughter of death, Sunīthā, widely known throughout the three worlds, gave birth to Vena. But he was dominated by passion and hatred, and behaved Unlawfully toward his subjects, so the seers who uttered the *brahman* killed him with stalks of *kuśa* grass purified with their spells. The seers then churned his right thigh with spells, and out of it, there on the ground, was born an ugly little man. He had red eyes and black hair and looked like a charred post. "Stay down!" those seers said to him. And so there came into being the awful Niṣādas, who took to the mountains and forests, and those other barbarians who dwell in the Vindhya mountains by the hundreds of thousands.

211. Excerpted from *MBh* 12.59.6–12.
212. The contents of this manual overlap in some interesting ways with Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra;* see the annotations to the translation of 12.59.
213. *MBh* 12.59.93. 214. *MBh* 12.59.94–95. 215. *MBh* 12.59.97.

> The great seers then churned his right hand, and from that came a man who looked like another Indra. He wore armor, had a sword strapped on, and had a bow and arrows. He knew the Vedas and their auxiliary texts, and was a master of the Veda of the Bow. The entire policy for administering the rod of force had lodged in this best of men, king. Then this son of Vena, his hands joined in humility, said to those great seers, "A highly refined mind that apprehends Law and Profit has developed within me. What should I do with it? Tell me truly. I shall do without hesitation any significant task you good men tell me to do."
>
> The Gods and the highest seers said to him, "Do without hesitation whatever is Law, having restrained yourself; having forsaken your likes and dislikes, acting the same toward every person, having put desire and anger and greed and pride far off and away. Keeping Law in view at all times, you must restrain forcibly any man in the world who strays from Law. In thought, deed, and word rise up repeatedly to the promise 'I shall guard the terrestrial *brahman.* Whatever here is declared in the policy for administering Law, or is based on the policy for the application of the royal rod of force, that I shall do without hesitation; I will never just follow my own will. And I shall never punish the brahmins.' And, promise, lord, 'I will save the world from the complete blending together of different things and people.' "
>
> Vena's son then replied to the Gods, who were there with the seers, "If the brahmins will be my assistants, O bulls among the Gods, then so be it."
>
> Those *brahman*-speakers said to him, "Let it be so."[216]

In the rest of this story, as told by Bhīṣma, Viṣṇu then led the whole cosmos in consecrating Vena's son (this was Pṛthu, though he is not so named in this text)[217] as king, and he presided over a golden age on the earth. Viṣṇu entered into him so that kings would be worshiped as Gods, and this is the reason for the preeminence of kings.[218] The Goddess Śrī arose from a lotus growing from Viṣṇu's forehead, and she was rooted in kingship along with Law and Riches.

What a striking, and familiarly ambivalent, conception of how the legitimate armed authority of the realm had come to be! The story culminates with Pṛthu, descended from God himself in the first place, whose earliest ancestors were too saintly to rule! Then we have one good king in Anaṅga, but self-indulgent degeneration emerges in his son, Atibala, Pṛthu's grandfather. Then comes Pṛthu's father, the derelict

216. *MBh* 12.59.98–116.
217. The patronymic Vainya and the name Pṛthu do occur together at 12.29.129 and 131.
218. For a wide-ranging discussion of the divinity of kings in ancient Indian texts, especially in the epics, see Sheldon Pollock's introduction to his translation of the *Araṇyakāṇḍa* (Goldman, ed., *Rāmāyaṇa,* 2: 43–54).

Vena,[219] whose behavior draws violent intervention by brahmin seers, who wield priestly weapons to slay the wicked king,[220] and then churn the world's repulsive barbarians from the wicked Vena's right leg and the ideal king from his right hand! This new king, Pṛthu, scion of Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa, the latest development in a dynamically changing line of kings, salvaged, refined, and educated through the brahmins' violent initiatives, must pledge to do dharma (which, interestingly, means devotion to duty and abnegation of self), guard the terrestrial *brahman*, never punish brahmins, and save the world from the "mixing" *(saṃkara)* of "different things and people." He agrees to do all of this if the brahmins will assist him, which they agree to do, and the Gods then bless him in all ways.

The main points to note in this programmatic description are, first, the fundamental primacy of the brahmin seers—as unapologetically violent political interventionists, as king-makers (who drew king and barbarian from the body of Vena), as guides of kings, and as principal charges of the king's protection and largesse—and, second, the bipolar requirements that the king use force (note that Pṛthu is created armed and armored) and cultivate various virtues of the new dharma.[221] An important point of difference between the Pṛthu story and the Pāṇḍava narrative of the *MBh* is that the Pṛthu story—similar to the Śuṅga revolution—shows brahmins taking the revolutionary initiative to slay Vena and create his virtuous successor from his corpse. The *Mahābhārata's* relieving Earth of its burden of loutish men of arms, of course, is carried out by kṣatriyas—under the guidance of Gods and brahmin agents to be sure, principally Kṛṣṇa Vāsudeva and Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vyāsa. As I said above, I believe the argument intended to segregate brahmins from violence is fundamental to the very conception of our *MBh;* instances of actual brahmin violence serve as the foil for such teachings, as well as being pointed reminders that brahmins' observance of *ahiṃsā* is a matter of dharma; it does not mean they are incapable of violence.

Among many other examples available in *The Laws for Kings* that teach both these points—the complementarity of brahmins and kṣatriyas, and the blending of old and new dharmas—I will briefly quote one, which

219. The *MBh* does not give us a detailed bill of particulars against Vena, but in Manu 9.66–67 we see an indication of the regard for him in the tradition of the strictly pious: He was a foremost king-seer of the past, but his mind had been "affected" by lust (*kāmopahatacetana*). He had allowed humans to follow the "reprehensible, beastly practice" (*paśudharmo vigarhitaḥ*) of allowing widows to remarry, and he brought about *varṇasaṃkara*, the "confusion of the social Orders."

220. Reminiscent, of course, of their killing of Cārvāka when Yudhiṣṭhira reentered Hāstinapura after the war.

221. He is to be "restrained" (*niyata*), which is given a gloss in the following verses: "Having forsaken your likes and dislikes, acting the same toward every person, having put desire and anger and greed and pride far off and away" (12.109cd–110).

could, with one complication, be seen as a perfect illustration of the model stated in the Pṛthu story.[222] At 12.124 Yudhiṣṭhira asked Bhīṣma about "habitual virtue" (*śīla*, specified at 12.124.64–65 in terms of the "new dharma" traits of benevolence, generosity, and altruism). Bhīṣma responded by repeating to Yudhiṣṭhira a lesson praising habitual virtue that Dhṛtarāṣṭra once taught to Duryodhana. In the course of this story Dhṛtarāṣṭra repeated a key lesson that the mighty ruler (the demon) Prahrāda once gave to Indra (who was here disguised as a brahmin).[223] The demon Prahrāda had conquered Indra's realms by his cultivation of virtue, and the disguised Indra served the demon king well as a pupil and was in turn instructed by him. Prahrāda eventually taught the hidden Indra the secret of his successful rule of the three worlds, and it amounts to another statement of the primacy of brahmins in setting governmental policy.

> *Prahrāda said:*
> O most excellent of brahmins, I am never resentful, I never say, "I am the king." I guide the wise sayings of those who advise me and ride along behind them. These men feel free when they speak to me and always guide me, as I am very attached to their words of wisdom, eager to learn, and not resentful; completely given to doing what is Right, my anger under control, I am restrained and I have restrained my senses. My directors gather them together, like bees do *kṣaudra* honey. I lick up the juices that are squeezed out at the tips of their tongues. I stand over my own kind as does the moon over the stars. The wisdom in the mouth of the brahmins is an immortal nectar upon the earth, an unexcelled eye; one goes forward after learning it.[224]

Yudhiṣṭhira's Embrace of Kṣatradharma *against Aśoka's* Ahiṃsā

That the constellation of general features I have been pointing to is a recurrent and deliberate feature of *The Book of Peace* is evident in a different form in the seer Utathya's lecture to the legendary king Māndhātar at 12.91. Echoing a yoga-derived point made a number of times in this book, Utathya urges upon Māndhātar the crucial nature of the king's duty:

222. The complication is that the main teacher in this text, Prahrāda, is a major "demon" (*asura*), a son of Diti (a Daitya). The symbolic significance of a demon's appearing here escapes me. I will note, however, that in other epic and Purāṇic texts Prahrāda does have the reputation of being highly virtuous (most famously as a devotee of Viṣṇu); but see too *MBh* 12.172. A frame-setting that is similar to the Prahrāda-Indra one here, and a set of themes that are also close to the "virtue" theme here, occur in a set of Indra-Asura texts in *The Laws for Gaining Absolute Freedom* (see *MBh* 12.215–21). The text at 12.215 is centered upon Prahrāda and Indra; two of the remaining four feature Prahrāda's mighty grandson, Bali.

223. The symbolic features of this text are numerous, but space does not permit a detailed discussion in such terms.

224. *MBh* 12.124.33–36.

> Know this, Māndhātar, the king exists for Law, not for doing what gives him pleasure. The king is the protector of the world. The king does his Lawful Duty and then becomes a God. If he does not do his Lawful Duty, he goes to the Naraka hell. People depend upon Law, and Law depends upon the king. The king who administers it rightly is the lord and husband of the earth.[225]

One reason for the seer's admonitions is that kings can take high ideals too far. Utathya continued,

> A king blessed with the Goddess of Splendid Wealth who is also dedicated to Highest Law is said to be evil.[226]
>
> The Gods then come to be despised, and some people say, "There is no Law." Those who live Lawlessly are very successful, and people flock to anything and everything,[227] thinking, "This will be good." When evil is not checked, the performance of Lawful Deeds is disrupted, and great Lawlessness occurs. They say day and night alike are dangerous. When evil is not checked, the twice-born do not perform vows and follow the Vedas, brahmins do not stretch forth the rites of sacrificial worship.[228]

This description of what happens when a king follows the values of the newer dharma too far[229] could have been composed with Aśoka in mind,[230] though the admonition is certainly relevant to the tender-minded Yudhiṣṭhira. This warning points to a problem suggested by Aśoka's affiliation with the Buddhist Saṅgha and his championing of *ahiṃsā:* His use of state violence has no grounding in principle, and it directly contradicts one of the main tenets of his very publicly stated value system.

I have always approached the *MBh* as a form of literature that makes some use of historical events, rather than as some kind of chronicle, and I have long believed that Yudhiṣṭhira, like all the Pāṇḍavas (like all the Gods and heroes of all human texts, for that matter) is a literary creation, designed by a literary, theo-philosophical artist for the purpose of giving others a new vision of a new world of possibilities. And for many years I have suspected that Yudhiṣṭhira was designed as a refutation, or at least

225. *MBh* 12.91.3–5.

226. *MBh* 12.91.6ab: *rājā paramadharmātmā lakṣmīvān pāpa ucyate.* "Highest Law" here is primarily *ahiṃsā*, though the term may refer more largely to some set of outlooks and attitudes connected to the worldview of yoga. In any case the problems described stem from the king's failing to punish wrong-doing.

227. That is, people no longer do their proper work. This confusion of work, with its economic and social repercussions, is part of the "mixing" *(saṃkara)* discussed earlier.

228. *MBh* 12.91.6cd–9.

229. This scenario provides an interesting contrast to the longer-standing problem of kings' neglecting their kingdoms because of their addictions (*vyasanas;* see 12.59.59–61 for a list of ten). For an example in the distant past of Yudhiṣṭhira's line, see the history of his forebear Saṃvaraṇa at *MBh* 1.160–63 (esp. 163), van Buitenen 1: 326–29.

230. I do not mean to suggest it actually was, though that is not impossible.

as a rebuttal, of the emperor Aśoka.[231] Nick Sutton has come to the same general conclusion, that Yudhiṣṭhira is some sort of response to Aśoka, and he nicely puts the general inference, "... it is inconceivable educated *brāhmaṇas* in the third century BCE or later would not have this historical figure [Aśoka] in mind when telling the story of a legendary ruler who triumphed in battle and yet hated the violence of warrior dharma and felt only remorse for the victory he won [Yudhiṣṭhira]."[232] Unlike Sutton, however, I believe with Pollock[233] that the figure of Yudhiṣṭhira at the beginning of *The Book of Peace,* in his attempt to renounce the kingship and go to the forest, was deliberately scripted there to represent what the authors of the *MBh* saw to be wrong with Aśoka. His attempted renunciation was made to allow the authors to show him being corrected and refuted by his family, the brahmins, and ultimately Kṛṣṇa Vāsudeva. The persona of Yudhiṣṭhira was, I believe, primarily constructed to depict the ambivalent quality of the blended dharma at the heart of the *MBh's rājadharma,* but the grand scene of the persuasion of Yudhiṣṭhira at the outset of *The Book of Peace* seems to have been constructed to demonstrate clearly the superiority of the *brāhmaṇya* king over the heathen king.

I think it fair to conjecture that the authors of this episode were implicitly charging Aśoka with having bought his *aśokatva* (his "being free of grief") cheaply,[234] in the currency of heathen, *nāstika* "Dharma," without having taken any real responsibility for it, without any genuine shriving or penance (no *śānti,* no *prāyaścitta*). Yudhiṣṭhira, on the other hand, is shown facing and fully accepting the horrific consequences of his war-making, undergoing the *praśamana* and *anuśāsana* of his betters, and being precluded from saying that he is an *ahiṃsra* man (someone devoted to *ahiṃsā*). Consistent with the fundamental duality written into Yudhiṣṭhira's basic character—terrifying Dharmarāja, psychopomp, sacrificer of battle, and stealthy Kaṅka, capable of the lying and deception

231. See note 203 above.

232. Nick Sutton, "Aśoka and Yudhiṣṭhira," 338–39.

233. See note 199 above.

234. Aśoka's Kaliṅga inscription suggests we understand his name as I have suggested above, "he whose grief is gone" (because of some change of mind or heart). We do not know where the name came from, and we cannot be certain what it meant to him or his subjects, but its significance cannot have been lost on "Vyāsa." We do know that the Mauryan uses the name in one inscription, that at Maski in Karṇataka (the first inscription, according to Hultzsch [p. l.], where the word *dharma* is used). Otherwise the name Aśoka is known only in Buddhist and Purāṇic literary sources (Hultzsch, *The Inscriptions of Aśoka,* 174–75). Buddhist legend records that upon accession to the Mauryan throne, Aśoka killed a number of brothers (including the rightful successor of their father Bindusāra), sparing one whose name is said to have been *vītaśoka,* "he whose grief is gone." These deeds earned him the appellation Caṇḍāśoka (Aśoka the Cruel), according to the *Aśokāvadāna.* The word itself could be construed as "remorseless," but while that sense is conceivably relevant to the young Aśoka, it would seem to have no relevance to his later career, nor to the Brahminic perception of him as indicated in the *MBh.* See Bongard-Levin, *Mauryan India,* 81–82; Strong, *Legend of King Aśoka,* 40–43; and Thapar, *Aśoka,* 28–29.

necessary for the successful execution of *nīti*, on the one hand; and honorable, patient, self-denying, kindly, and generous supporter of needy brahmins on the other—Yudhiṣṭhira, of course, would really like to have it both ways: To be the Over-King of the world (his ambition in undertaking the Rājasūya) like Aśoka, and a kindly father of all creatures promoting peace and universal harmlessness, as Aśoka described himself.[235] The narrative of *The Book of Peace*, however, and the instructions of *The Laws for Kings* that follow, demonstrate to Yudhiṣṭhira that he cannot have it both ways, that he must accept the doing of violence, leave *ahiṃsā* to brahmins, and be content with the intermediate, qualified *śīla* (virtue) of the newer dharma.

After his neglect of brahmin primacy and the entailed abandonment of *varṇadharma*, the fundamental problem with Aśoka's rule (from the point of view of brahmins unhappy with it, and judging from the force with which the *MBh* insists upon the necessity of socially sanctioned violence) must have been his apparently blithe embrace of, propagandizing for, and enforcement of a relatively thoroughgoing observance of *ahiṃsā* (including the proscription of brahmin animal sacrifices) while neither relinquishing nor justifying his own use of judicial and military violence.[236] Aśoka's affirmation of a Buddhist-inspired dharma on one side and his continued governance of the empire would have burdened him heavily with the "politically incapacitating bifurcation" Pollock aptly described,[237] had the emperor worried about logical consistency like a pandit.

A ruler may be excused for implementing policy and leaving theory for later, but the brahmin authors of *The Book of Peace*, being king-makers rather than kings themselves, took on this issue in the *MBh* and arrived at the interesting solution I have described with Yudhiṣṭhira and *The Laws for Kings*. They addressed the bifurcation inherent in Aśoka's rule and made a valiant attempt to resolve it by their parsing of the different ethical values between the brahmin and kṣatriya *varṇas*, and by trying to infuse the violence which they believed was required for a safe and hierarchically distinguished society with many of the attitudes and habits of the newer dharma. The result was Yudhiṣṭhira, who presented the Aśokan "bifurcation" for consideration when he resolved to turn his back on rule,

235. I am describing here what I believe is the brahmins' construction of the character of Yudhiṣṭhira as a dialectical response to their notion of Aśoka. As I noted in quoting the Twelfth Major Rock Edict above, Aśoka did not pledge himself not to use violence and was in fact threatening violence in that inscription. But Aśoka did advocate nonviolence in general; that is, for everyone other than his government. The brahmins writing the *Śāntiparvan* narrative no doubt found this position, particularly as it had been directed fundamentally at them, naïve and simply self-serving.

236. See the section above entitled "The Double Crisis of Dharma Provoked by the Mauryans."

237. See Pollock's introduction to the *Ayodhyākāṇḍa* (Goldman, ed., *Rāmāyaṇa*, 2: 70).

but who was then persuaded of its wrongness and agreed to rule. Then—calmed, consecrated, and instructed—he performed a Horse Sacrifice as expiation for the wrongs he had committed in the war and went on to rule the Bhārata kingdom for thirty-six years.[238]

The name his brahmin creators gave to Yudhiṣṭhira actually argues his superiority to Aśoka in this regard. Composed of *yudhi* and *sthiraḥ* (a slightly unusual sort of compound with an inflected case form as its first member), it literally means "steady, steadfast, firm, unwavering in war, or battle." This surely cannot be a literal description of the eldest Pāṇḍava, because he did not have a remarkable degree of perseverance in battle, as Arjuna and Bhīma did. But his name applies more abstractly to the broader issues being argued here with respect to the acceptance and employment of violence as Meritorious, Lawful Action (dharma). In this regard Yudhiṣṭhira is ultimately, if not immediately, "steadfast in war." He comes to "abide within the war he has waged as a king"; that is, he owns up to, accepts, the war he has sponsored, accepts it as good and necessary, as a sacrifice well made. Yudhiṣṭhira was slow to accept these terrible responsibilities, and it is hard to imagine him ever being whole-hearted about them, in spite of the complex and time-consuming processes of the *śānti* and the expiatory Horse Sacrifice. But in the end he became true to the *dharmayuddha* that had gone forward in his name—in the end he was *yudhi sthiraḥ*.

Violence and Dharma: The Two "Bookends" of the Great Bhārata War

While Yudhiṣṭhira represented an ethical perspective that was (from the point of view of his creators) more complex than and superior to Aśoka's, the fundamental ambivalence of his character never dissipated. Yudhiṣṭhira did acquiesce to the complex and violent dharma of Brahminically defined kingship, and he ruled the kingdom for thirty-six years, but a pall hangs over the epic narrative from the conclusion of Bhīṣma's instructions all the way to the end of the tale. Furthermore, this sense of insufficiency in the *praśamana-anuśāsana* apparently was shared by some in the Indian tradition, for a different and more powerful solution was developed at, I now firmly believe, a somewhat later time. I am referring of course to the *Bhagavad Gītā*, the most famous and most influential part of the *MBh*, and I close this introduction with one last suggestion about Yudhiṣṭhira, *The Book of Peace*, and its synthesis of old

238. Nick Sutton ("Aśoka and Yudhiṣṭhira"), seeing Yudhiṣṭhira's tender side as the whole of his persona, takes no account of these fundamental, defining actions. Yudhiṣṭhira was sympathetic to the ethical values of renouncers and *nāstikas*, and he was remorseful as Aśoka was, but he abandoned his ethical impulse—which was certainly more radical than Aśoka's—and became the king. He voices occasional dissatisfaction with his lot even after he has accepted it (see for example 12.98.1), but these pangs no longer impede his doing his duty.

and new dharma for the new king. I sketch this suggestion in broad outline without arguing it here, for it leads us into a set of considerations that I take up in connection with *The Laws for Gaining Absolute Freedom.*

No matter how ingenious and inspired the authors of the *Mahābhārata* were in creating Yudhiṣṭhira's character, or how profound the debate in *The Book of Peace* that persuaded Yudhiṣṭhira to become the Bhārata king, or how thorough the ensuing therapeutic and instructional process, with its parsing and blending of dharmas, the solution in *The Laws for Kings* to the "bifurcation" of dharma seems not to have been fully adequate or satisfying. It may well have been satisfying to its brahmin authors, who became great beneficiaries of state-sponsored violence while paying almost none of its cost physically, spiritually, or psychologically. But the warriors and kings who were directed by *The Book of Peace* to embrace violence and bloodshed dutifully, even enthusiastically, may have found the blend of old and new dharmas an uninspiring compromise. The rigorous insistence upon the distinction of the *varṇas* condemned kṣatriyas always to be purveyors of violence and harm. They were to carry on with their ancient, terrifying, glorious, and bloody *svadharma*, but now their actions were to be infused with new social and ascetic virtues, to the extent that these did not interfere with their duties to punish and wage war offensively and defensively, all the while remaining subservient to their Veda-endowed priests. Any evil attached to their actions was to be dissipated after the fact by expiations and service to the brahmins.[239]

When compared to the arguments and themes of *The Laws for Kings*, the *Bhagavad Gītā* seems clearly to be a later and improved solution to the same basic problem of reconciling the older and the newer senses of dharma (action and virtue, *svadharma* and *paramadharma*), especially violence and *ahiṃsā*.[240] While preserving the infusion in *The Laws for Kings* of the older dharma with the ascetic attitudes and habits of the newer dharma, the *Bhagavad Gītā* incorporates much more complex arguments of *karmayoga* and *bhaktiyoga* (see immediately below) than does *The Laws for Kings.*[241]

239. For one example of the latter idea, see *MBh* 12.132.11–15.

240. By *Bhagavad Gītā* I mean basically the argument of the first twelve chapters of Kṛṣṇa's sermon and demonstration to Arjuna. The *BhG* has an interesting and complicated history. Some important studies over the past three decades by Georg von Simson ("Die Einschaltung der *Bhagavad Gītā* im *Bhīṣma parvan* des *Mahābhārata*"): Gajanan Shripat Khair (*Quest for the Original Gītā*), and Mislav Ježić ("The First Yoga Layer in the *Bhagavadgītā*" and "Textual Layers in the *Bhagavadgītā* as Traces of Indian Cultural History") have proposed valuable arguments bearing upon the history of the *BhG*. Von Simson's work is particularly important, for it convincingly shows how the *BhG* was inserted into its specific textual context. Angelika Malinar's comprehensive and thorough *Rājavidyā* contains an extensive and pointed review of the most important prior scholarship on the *BhG*.

241. Several interesting considerations of the opposition of the active life of *svadharma* (*pravṛtti*) and the life of withdrawal and yoga (*nivṛtti*) appear in *The Laws for Gaining Absolute Freedom*. These texts stand in the background of the *BhG*'s doctrines of action done without any desire for benefit (*niṣkāmakarma*) and of *karmayoga*, the doctrine that one may perform one's *svadharma* with a mind transformed in essentially the same ways as a forest *yogin*'s. See Fitzgerald, "The *Mokṣa* Anthology," 256–70 and 305–19.

These more sophisticated arguments allow warriors and kings (and, by analogy, all other devotees of God) to perform the deeds their *svadharmas require*—which, the *BhG* explained, had been designed and authorized by God—with a clear conscience and filled with a sense of rightness and justification rooted in their love of God. With this latter theme the *BhG* absolves the warrior of moral responsibility for violence. If the warrior performs his *svadharma* with the proper mental mixture of yoga and *bhakti* (in which an emotionally charged sense of direct connection to God performs some of the same functions of reorganizing mind and body as does *dhyāna*, deep meditation, in the earlier forms of yoga[242]), then any evil he commits will be discharged by God. The *BhG* brought the solution in *The Laws for Kings* fully into the more personal and subject-centered ethical discourse dominated by the various forms of yoga, and it eliminated the need for ritual *śānti* and expiation *(prāyaścitta)*.[243]

My hypothesis that the *Bhagavad Gītā* is a later amelioration of the kṣatriyas' ethical horizons over those set for them by *The Laws for Kings* finds some support in John Brockington's recent pushing forward of the probable date of the *BhG* to, roughly, "the first to third centuries A.D."[244] Brockington's arguments are based primarily upon stylistic features. Many historical scholars as well as myself, earlier, dated the *BhG* in the second century B.C., primarily because of the great deal of evidence at that time of the rise of the Bhāgavata cult focused on Kṛṣṇa Vāsudeva. But that evidence only establishes a likely "date after which" the *BhG* developed. It does not entail the argument that the *BhG* we now have must have arisen at the same time as Bhāgavata Vaiṣṇavism began to flourish, as if that movement or Kṛṣṇa *bhakti* had disappeared at the beginning of the first century B.C. Brockington's later dating of the text and my suggestion that it developed in the wake of the arguments in *The Laws for Kings* are not hampered by the fact that Vaiṣṇavism rose to eminence in the second century B.C.

242. Dampening impulses and desires, suppressing the natural taken-for-grantedness of egocentrism and self-interest, centering and focusing the mind and the body. My 1983 paper, "The Great Epic of India as Religious Rhetoric" outlines the main movement of the *BhG*'s argument very succinctly (with the unfortunate typo of "warfare" for "welfare" in line 15 from the bottom on p. 618). That paper develops an essentially parallel, but differently articulated and much more broadly stated, interpretation of the *BhG* as a central element of the received text of the epic. The *MBh* that concerns me now is the putative Śuṅga or post-Śuṅga text that likely knew nothing of a *Bhagavad Gītā*.

243. Twenty years ago Madeleine Biardeau characterized the *BhG* as resolving the king's dilemma by showing him how "every sort of impurity could be sacralised and turned into svadharma" ("The Salvation of the King in the *Mahābhārata*," 97).

244. John Brockington, *The Sanskrit Epics*, 148.

There have been several interesting considerations of the *BhG* in relation to Aśoka.[245] I cannot go into them here, but if my suggestion has any merit, it will be necessary to put the eldest Pāṇḍava in between Aśoka and Arjuna. Of course Yudhiṣṭhira is the one who had the responsibility to stand up to Aśoka first anyway. In his introductory text, *Hinduism*, R. C. Zaehner puzzled over why Kṛṣṇa chose to instruct Arjuna with the *Bhagavad Gītā* rather than Yudhiṣṭhira. "Why, one wonders, did the Incarnate God elect to waste his words on Arjuna rather than on Yudhiṣṭhira who was athirst to hear them?"[246] I hope we are now in a position to seek better answers to that question than the great Professor Zaehner was.

A Map of Book 12, The Book of Peace

A Bird's-Eye View of Bhīṣma's Instruction in the *Mahābhārata*

The first fifty-five chapters of *The Book of Peace* narrate the persuasion of Yudhiṣṭhira to accept the kingship, his becoming king of the Bharatas, and the inauguration of the instructional *śānti*. Bhīṣma's instruction begins in the fifty-sixth chapter, and the written manuscript tradition—which is corroborated by various internal features of the flow of the text—, distinguishes four phases to the instruction as it spans the rest of the twelfth and almost all of the thirteenth major books of the *MBh:* (1) The instructions in *rājadharma* which make up the rest of the minor *parvan* (*upaparvan*) named *Rājadharmaparvan (RDh);* (2) the *Āpaddharmaparvan (ADh)*, an anthology of texts dealing with the question of how requirements of dharma are to be regarded and performed, or not, when circumstances prevent or impede their proper performance; (3) the *Mokṣadharmaparvan (MDh)*, an anthology of texts dealing with matters involving the newer sort of dharma, the dharma of ultimate personal beatitude and Absolute Escape *(mokṣa)* from rebirth; and (4) the *Dānadharmaparvan (DDh)*, which lies, formally, in Book 13 of the *Mahābhārata.* It is nominally dedicated to the norms pertinent to the king's making gifts and grants (particularly to brahmins), but it actually comprises texts on a variety of subjects. The last two chapters of Book 13 (13.153–54) form a separate minor *parvan* which narrates the death and cremation of Bhīṣma. The accompanying table (Table 1) shows the formal organization and progression of Bhīṣma's *anuśāsana* of Yudhiṣṭhira.

245. Most notably Carl Keller, "Violence et dharma chez Aśoka et dans le Bhagavadgita" and in pp. 435–44 of Malinar's *Rājavidyā*. More free-ranging, but still interesting, is Israel Selvanayagam's "Aśoka and Arjuna as Counterfigures Standing on the Field of Dharma."

246. Zaehner, *Hinduism*, p. 65.

Table 1. Formal Overview of Books 12 and 13 of the *Mahābhārata*

	Book 12	Book 13
Name	*Śāntiparvan* *The Book of Peace*	*Anuśāsanaparvan* *The Book of the Instructions*
Size	27,721 lines in 363 chapters	14,057 lines in 154 chapters
Number of sub-*parvans*	3	2
Sub-*parvan* names and numbers	*Rājadharmaparvan* (84) *Āpaddharmaparvan* (85) *Mokṣadharmaparvan* (86)	*Dānadharmaparvan* (87) *Bhīṣmasvargārohaṇaparvan* (88)
Translation of sub-*parvan* names	*The Laws for Kings* *Law in Times of Distress* *The Laws for Gaining Absolute Freedom*	*The Laws for Giving Gifts* *Bhīṣma's Ascent to Heaven*

Though this introduction is concerned primarily with *The Laws for Kings* and *Law in Times of Distress*, which are translated in this volume, this map includes an outline of the whole of Bhīṣma's instruction in order to situate *The Laws for Kings* and *Law in Times of Distress* properly within it. But having registered Book 13 in its proper place, the rest of this introduction mostly ignores it.

A Closer View of the *Śāntiparvan* and Its Three Collections

Apart from the *Śāntiparvan's* initial narrative (12.1–55, Part 1 of the *Rājadharmaparvan*), the contents of these books are instructional lectures, sermons, histories, and parables which Bhīṣma presents directly to Yudhiṣṭhira, either on his own authority, or on the authority of various Gods, seers, or kings whom he quotes. Sometimes there are brief exchanges between the Kaurava grandfather and the eldest Pāṇḍava, and occasionally, in *The Laws for Kings*, there is a little movement in the overarching narrative.[247] Two exceptions to the standard frame occur in *Law in Times of Distress*. At 12.160 Nakula asked Bhīṣma about the origins of the sword, and at 12.161 Yudhiṣṭhira and his brothers huddled privately and debated the *puruṣārthas*, a debate that ended with the first direct and extended recommendation of *mokṣa* as a focus of human motivation in these instructional collections.[248] Also, the Bhīṣma-

247. At the end of 12.58 and beginning of 12.59; at 12.76.15 ff.; 12.161.48 relates (falsely, as the text stands now) that Yudhiṣṭhira began questioning Bhīṣma about *mokṣa*.

248. It is Yudhiṣṭhira who exalts *mokṣa* over dharma, artha, and kāma. Yudhiṣṭhira had earlier exalted the pursuit of *mokṣa* when refusing to accept the kingship of the Bharatas.

Yudhiṣṭhira protocol is temporarily suspended in the *MDh*, in the *Nārāyaṇīya* section, when, at 12.327.1, after a very long period of having been silent, King Janamejaya interrupted Vaiśaṃpāyana with a question, and Vaiśaṃpāyana offered Janamejaya further instructions on the basis of his own learning (extending up to the end of 12.339).

For the most part, these lessons are a succession of discrete textual units of varying length and internal complexity that sometimes do and sometimes do not exhibit thematic connections to the other textual units of Bhīṣma's instruction. That is to say, each of these collections clearly is an anthology constituted from various textual items that preexisted its insertion into the anthology. But it is not the case that the three anthologies of the *Śāntiparvan* were assembled at the same time and in the same fashion. In fact, each of the three anthologies exhibits distinct traits of assembly and construction. Nor is it the case that the separate *adhyāyas* (chapters) of the collection are the fundamental units of textual construction. Many of these texts, particularly some in the first portions of the *RDh* and the *ADh*, seem at times to have been assembled into the *adhyāyas* from preexisting passages and quotations, perhaps at the time of their being made into "Bhīṣma's instruction of Yudhiṣṭhira." Nonetheless, the "maps" offered below are constructed in terms of the *adhyāyas* and groups of *adhyāyas*, because dealing with the collection in sub-*adhyāya* units would be extremely difficult. Even more important, much more careful study of these texts needs to be done before anyone can say confidently where any sub-*adhyāya* boundaries actually lie.

I am not going to enter into a detailed discussion of these issues here, but the brief surveys of the *RDh* and the *ADh* that follow will record the basic surface facts of each collection, which are fundamental to the careful determination of their structure and history. Nor do I go into detailed systematic discussions of the contents of these anthologies as such, for they are too multifarious and heterogeneous. I do, however, briefly present the topic of *āpaddharma*, which seems sadly to have been almost completely neglected by prior scholarship.[249] The third part of this introduction makes some basic and general points about the contents of the anthologies (about the *RDh* in particular) in the context of the *MBh* and its likely development in post-Mauryan northern India.

As I begin this more specific discussion, readers will find Table 2, which presents a closer overview of the three anthologies of the *Śāntiparvan*, of some interest and use.

249. As one might expect, P. V. Kane does not overlook some of the provisions of *āpaddharma*. In vol. 2 of the *HDhŚ*, 118 ff. and 129 f., he does present some of the considerations pertaining to brahmins' livelihoods in difficult times. But he does not seem anywhere to offer a general consideration of the idea of *āpad* and the meaning and implications of the requirements of dharmas having different forms for the same person under differing external circumstances.

Table 2. General Survey of the *Śāntiparvan*, Book 12 of the *Mahābhārata*

	Rājadharma-parvan, Part 1	*Rājadharma-parvan*, Part 2	*Āpaddharma-parvan*	*Mokṣadharma-parvan*
Contents	Epic narrative	Bhīṣma's instructions on the laws for kings	Bhīṣma's instructions on laws during times of distress	Bhīṣma's instructions on the norms pertaining to absolute freedom
Text	12.1–55	12.56–128	12.129–67	12.168–353
Size	3,840 lines in 55 chapters	5,692 lines in 73 chapters	3,280 lines in 39 chapters	14,909 lines in 186 chapters
Number of component texts		66	27	63

The Rājadharmaparvan

The *Rājadharmaparvan* falls naturally into two segments, the narrative portion, and a second portion, which comprises the first of Bhīṣma's didactic collections. I am not going to present a separate essay on the contents of the *RDh*, for much of what I have already said here provides a general reading of the contents of the two parts of the *parvan* from the perspective I thought most interesting and important, in light of existing scholarship on this part of the *MBh*. Because of the paucity of scholarship on *āpaddharma*, however, I present a brief introduction to the substance of that idea below. Before leaving the idea of *rājadharma* behind, however, I want to give a brief summary of the *rājadharma* instructions which Yudhiṣṭhira provided at 12.108.

In 12.108 Yudhiṣṭhira gives a partial recapitulation of the instructions Bhīṣma has given him in the prior fifty-three chapters:

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

O scorcher of your enemies, this easy linking of verses in the form of instructions has exactly recounted for brahmins, kṣatriyas, vaiśyas, and śūdras their Lawful Duties, the forms of their behavior, their livelihoods, and the means and benefits of their livelihoods; also the behavior of kings, the treasury, and the great feat of generating produce for the treasury, fostering the good qualities of one's ministers, causing one's subjects to prosper, the rule of strength with regard to the six measures of foreign policy, the policy for using the army; recognizing the man who is corrupted, the characteristics of the man who is not corrupted; the multitude of detailed characterizations of those who are average, those who are deficient, and those who are superior; how the king who is waxing greater should remain so; how to keep a neutral king contented; and the way a destitute king is supported. Similarly, Bhārata, you have declared the way the king seeking conquest should behave.[250]

250. *MBh* 12.108.1–6ab.

This listing of the topics of *rājadharma* is historically interesting because it occurs at what might well have been the original final perimeter of the *Rājadharmaparvan.*[251] It is certainly not a complete list of all that the *Mahābhārata's Rājadharmaparvan* contains, but it is a fair representation of many of the topics treated. It lacks specific mention of the history and philosophy of kingship in 12.59 and 12.67–71, and it does not single out the collection's extensive treatment of the relations of brahmins and kṣatriyas (12.72–79). Nor does it note the tension between the violence of kingship and the urge to nonviolence, which I believe is thematic in the eleven texts on war and conquest between 12.93 and 12.107. It does, however, embrace the important section on the makeup of society and the role of kings in society (12.60–66, "The Superiority of the Law of Kings over Other Laws") when it mentions it "has exactly recounted for brahmins, kṣatriyas, vaiśyas, and śūdras their Lawful Duties, the forms of their behavior, their livelihoods, and the means and benefits of their livelihoods; also the behavior of kings . . ."

***Part 1 of the* Rājadharmaparvan.** The first fifty-five *adhyāyas* develop the instructional framework for Bhīṣma's pacificatory instruction of Yudhiṣṭhira, and I formally refer to this narrative as Part 1 of the *Rājadharmaparvan.* I have subdivided these fifty-five chapters of Part 1 into an outer narrative periphery and five specific textual segments, which are titled and labeled as segments of the minor *parvan,* 84a, 84b, and so on, as van Buitenen did for segments of minor *parvans* in the volumes he translated, and as I did in Book 11. Table 3 shows these divisions.

***Part 2 of the* Rājadharmaparvan.** As soon as we begin to survey the *Śāntiparvan's* collections individually, we find interesting features on the surface. Part 2 of the *Rājadharmaparvan* is seventy-three *adhyāyas* in length and consists of sixty-six separate lectures or sermons directly told by Bhīṣma to Yudhiṣṭhira, or repeated by Bhīṣma from some other authority. Most of the *adhyāyas* of Bhīṣma's instruction in the *RDh* are discrete texts that treat a question or theme more or less independently from all other texts in the collection. Five of these texts are made up of two or three *adhyāyas* bound together. Of these five, four have clear narrative frames set in place by Bhīṣma at the outset of the first chapter of the group, and these frames span the set of chapters from beginning to end.[252] The fifth, 12.64–65 (in which Viṣṇu lectures King Māndhātar on the Law of *kṣatra*

251. See the historical hypothesis I propose below in "Reading the Map of Bhīṣma's Instructions on Kingship."

252. The four referred to are *MBh* 12.91–92, "The Song of the Āṅgirasa Brahmin Utathya [to King Māndhātar] on the Law of *Kṣatra*"; 12.93–95, "The Song Sung by the Seer Vāmadeva for King Vasumanas"; 12.105–7, "The Sage Kālakavṛkṣīya's Instruction of Prince Kṣemadarśa of Kosala"; and 12.125–26, "The Song of the Seer Ṛṣabha."

Table 3. Overview of the *RDh*, Part 1

Segment	Title	Chapters
	Part 1: Yudhiṣṭhira Becomes King of the Bharatas	**12.1–55**
*	Yudhiṣṭhira is filled with grief and depression rather than joy, especially because he has killed his eldest maternal brother, Karṇa.	12.1
84a	The Doom of Karṇa (explains why Karṇa was doomed)	12.2–5
*	Because Kuntī had kept Karṇa's true identity secret, Yudhiṣṭhira curses women to be unable to keep secrets.	12.6
84b	The Persuasion of Yudhiṣṭhira, Part 1: The Family	12.7–19
84c	The Persuasion of Yudhiṣṭhira, Part 2: The Seers and Kṛṣṇa	12.20–38
84d	Yudhiṣṭhira the King in Hāstinapura	12.39–44
84e	Kṛṣṇa Vāsudeva Inaugurates Bhīṣma's Instruction of Yudhiṣṭhira	12.45–55

* Signifies narrative introduction or outer periphery of the entire segment.

while he, Viṣṇu, is disguised as Indra), lacks this explicit framing, but it tells a story that begins in the middle of 12.64 and continues unbroken across 12.65.[253] All but one of the multichapter instructions, and all of the framed episodes, occur in the latter half of the collection. We shall see too that this point of contrast is even more striking when we consider the maps of the *ADh* and the *MDh.*

The next thing to notice about the map of the *RDh* is that much of it has been thematically organized, beginning with 12.60. Chapters 12.56–58 relate three separate, general texts of advice on kingship, and then the first day's instructions conclude with some narrative elaboration (12.58.25–30). The resumption of instruction on the morrow is elaborated at the beginning of 12.59, followed by Yudhiṣṭhira's eloquent question, "What is a king?" which has been translated and discussed above.[254] As we saw in the earlier discussion of 12.59, Bhīṣma's answer to this question evolved into the all-important account of the brahmins' creating Pṛthu and establishing him as the king who was exemplary, as he was restrained *(niyata)* and properly subservient to the brahmins.[255] Immediately following that key story, Yudhiṣṭhira asks in 12.60 a very broad question about the Law of the four Orders *(varṇas)* of society, the Law of the four

253. *Adhyāyas* 12.73 and 74 both have an Aila King (i.e., a king descended in the lunar dynasty from Ilā) as interlocutor: In 12.73 it is the early lunar king Purūravas, and it may be Purūravas in 12.74 as well. In the first case, however, Aila is conversing with the God Wind, and with the seer Kaśyapa in the second. These are two separate texts on the same topic.

254. See the translation and discussion above at p. 132.

255. See *MBh* 12.59.109, with my annotation, and 112 ff.

Religious Patterns of Life *(āśramas)*, and about many of the practical topics of governance. As Bhīṣma begins to respond, he first makes a brief statement that seems to inaugurate the instruction for the first time.[256] Bhīṣma then presents six texts in seven *adhyāyas* (12.60–66, 84f)[257] which develop the complex theme of permitted and prohibited occupations and Religious Life-Patterns, and the responsibility of kṣatriyas to enforce these rules. Five general texts on the nature and character of kingship (12.67–71, 84g) follow, and then eight texts present different aspects of the relationship between kings (or kṣatriyas) and brahmins (12.72–79, 84h).[258] Seven texts on the qualifications of the king's ministers and retainers and the criteria the king should use in selecting these servants follow (12.80–86, 84i). This section is followed by four texts on the fundamental issues of the fortified city, economics, taxation, and the king's treasury (12.87–90, 84j). The first of these five sets of texts has no sharply defined topic or theme, but the other four stand out quite clearly, and all five sets seem definitely to be the product of a concerted effort to shape this collection.

The thirty-four texts (in thirty-five chapters) that make up the first part of the *rājadharma* instructions exhibit a tautness that is noticeably lacking in all other parts of Bhīṣma's instruction of Yudhiṣṭhira. We will see, in fact, a progressive loosening of editorial integration as we go from the first half of the *RDh* into its second half, from there into the *ADh*, from there into the *MDh*, and finally into the relatively very relaxed *DDh*. As the instruction progresses, the relatively tightly organized sections of single-chapter lessons found in 12.56 through 12.90 give way to looser aggregations of texts that include longer, multichapter recitals. The first part of the *RDh* instructions was definitely assembled from preexisting texts, but this portion of the collection is not simply a loose compilation of such material. A significant effort was made to weave the elements into a (relatively) seamless text that appears as a genuine dialogue between

256. The statement (12.60.6) could be seen as merely resuming the instruction, and, of course, in the actual context, that is how it is to be read. But it is worth noting as a statement that may once have been the beginning point of Bhīṣma's instruction of Yudhiṣṭhira.

257. Recall that 12.64–65 make a single text. As with Part 1 of the *Rājadharmaparvan*, I have taken the liberty of distinguishing subsections of the text (usually) without any formal indications within the manuscript tradition of the existence of a textual segment. So, continuing the series from *RDh* 1, the first grouping I distinguish in *RDh* 2 is 84f, and so on through 84p. In the case of the later anthologies—the *ADh* and *MDh*—the collection is segmented by the manuscript tradition itself (in its colophons), and in those cases I follow that tradition. I think most readers will agree with the boundaries I draw in the text, though some may disagree about how I formulate the labels for the various segments, and some may feel my visibly segmenting *RDh* 2 is too egregious an imposition on the text. In my judgment, the gains in accessibility and convenience outweigh what is, after all, a relatively minor editorial imposition.

258. This set of eight texts contains, in my judgment, two subsections: 12.73–76, four texts dealing with the necessary complementarity of kṣatriyas and brahmins, and 12.77–79, three texts dealing with the theme of good and bad brahmins and the king's responsibilities toward them.

Bhīṣma and Yudhiṣṭhira. Few of its instructional units consist of more than one chapter, far different from the arrangement of the *MDh*, quite different from the *ADh*, and different too from the latter half of the *RDh*. The framed, multichapter texts which become progressively more frequent in the *Śāntiparvan* represent a slackening of the Bhīṣma-Yudhiṣṭhira frame. The longer and more involved a given recital is, the more the frame recedes from the consciousness of the audience. While the Bhīṣma-Yudhiṣṭhira frame in 12.56–90 is definitely an artificial frame, we are reminded of it often, and it retains some narrative vitality. The farther we move in the *Śāntiparvan*, the more the frame seems just a device. In the *MDh* the Bhīṣma-Yudhiṣṭhira frame often fades from sight, and once it is even discarded, as I mentioned earlier.

The second half of the *RDh* collection consists of thirty-two texts in thirty-eight chapters. We shall see the looser integration I have already discussed, but a few other complexities arise in these texts as the *RDh* instruction progresses. Immediately after the five sets of texts already itemized (84f–j), we find the first formally framed, multichapter text of the collection, the song of the seer Utathya to King Māndhātar on various high ideals of kingship (12.91–92, 84k),[259] a text that seems to stand apart from its neighbors at first glance. This seeming break in the effort to structure the collection thematically proves to be temporary, as we next encounter eleven texts (in fifteen *adhyāyas*) treating various issues and aspects of violence, warfare, and conquest (12.93–107, 84l), including the Aśokan theme of conquest by dharma. At this point the sequence of topics treated gets very interesting in certain respects.

In 12.108 Yudhiṣṭhira asks about the unity and survival of kingless tribal republics *(gaṇa-s)*. After Bhīṣma outlines various considerations regarding these political entities, Yudhiṣṭhira asks about the essential duty of dharma, which Bhīṣma answers by praising teachers and parents—teachers are laudable, parents are superior to teachers, and mothers are superior to fathers (12.109). Following these two chapters, there are yet two more clearly discernible groupings of texts, each of which seems at first glance peculiarly out of place. First, in 12.110–115 (84m), there are six texts which I label with the theme "Discerning Reality behind Surface Appearances in Difficult Circumstances." These texts share certain important themes with the topic of *āpaddharma*, and several of them explicitly raise the basic issue of *āpaddharma*, that is, exceptions to rules of dharma in exigent circumstances. These six texts appear to belong under the rubric of the *ADh*. This set is followed by a set of four texts (12.116–19, 84n) that treat again (and in terms often quite similar to the set at 12.80–86) the theme of the king's servants and the criteria for their selection. The next six texts treat important themes, but no clear thread unites any of

259. This text has certain thematic overlaps with Māndhātar's instruction by Viṣṇu disguised as Indra at 12.64–65.

them (with the exception of 12.121 and 122, 84o, two texts which both treat the theme of judicial punishment). The penultimate text of the collection, 12.127, again singles out honoring one's parents as a very important form of dharma, and the ultimate text, 12.128, explicitly and deliberately addresses the fundamental issues of *āpaddharma.*

I sum up this listing in Table 4 before discussing it further.

Table 4. *RDh* Overview, Part 2

Segment	Title	Chapters
	Part 2: Bhīṣma's Instructions on the Laws for Kings	12.56–128
*	The basic virtues of kings (both harshness and mildness; vigorous exertion) and the origins of the science of policy and kingship	12.56–59
84f	Permitted and Prohibited Occupations and Life-Patterns (The laws for the different Orders of society and the different Religious Patterns of Life)	12.60–66
84g	The Nature and Character of Kingship (The importance of kings and their duties [protection, punishment, policy]; the divinity of kings [in 12.68])	12.67–71
84h	Kings and Brahmins (Section contains an introductory text and two subsections comprising four and three texts respectively)	12.72–79
84h-1	The Necessary Complementarity of Kṣatriyas and Brahmins	—12.73–76
84h-2	Good and Bad Brahmins and the King's Responsibilities toward Them	—12.77–79
84i	The Servants of the King (The attributes of good ministers)	12.80–86
84j	The Fortified City, Economics, Taxation, and Treasury	12.87–90
84k	The Song of Utathya (On the high nature and character of kingship)	12.91–92
84l	Law, Force, and War (Section contains eleven texts, including the three-chapter text 84l-1 at its beginning and 84l-2 [which contains two texts in three chapters] at its end)	12.93–107
84l-1	The Song Sung by the Seer Vāmadeva to King Vasumanas (Kings must be devoted to Law, treat conquered enemies with respect, be kind to their subjects, conquer and control their own spirit, and win people over with Law rather than violence.)	—12.93–95
84l-2	The Conquest of One's Enemy by Indirect Methods (On the nonviolent conquest of one's enemy; made up of two texts, one of which, 84l-2a, is a three-chapter text)	—12.104–7
84l-2a	The Sage Kālakavṛkṣīya's Instruction of Prince Kṣemadarśa of Kosala (On the subversion of one's enemy)	=12.105–7
*	After recapitulating the topics of instruction to this point, Yudhiṣṭhira asks about elitism ("secrecy") in kingless tribal federations (*gaṇas*, "republics"). Bhīṣma discusses the political dynamics of such structures and says some elitism is necessary.	12.108
*	Bhīṣma teaches that the central and essential Law is to honor one's parents and teacher, especially one's mother.	12.109
84m	Discerning Reality behind Surface Appearances in Difficult Circumstances	12.110–115
84n	The Servants of the King, Part 2	12.116–19
*	General advice on kingly prudence, including the analogy of the peacock	12.120
84o	The Origin of the Rod of Punishment	12.121–22
*	General advice on the king's pursuit of the Group of Three (kāma, artha, dharma).	12.123
*	A lesson given by Dhṛtarāṣṭra to Duryodhana: The demon Prahrāda took Royal Splendor (Śrī) from Indra because he was virtuous; Indra regained Royal Splendor by taking Prahrāda's virtue.	12.124
84p	The Song of the Seer Ṛṣabha (On the hope and disappointment of Dharma; contains the story of Skinny)	12.125–26
*	Yama, who is Dharma, teaches the seer Gautama that one should honor one's parents every day and worship the Gods with Horse Sacrifices that are replete with presents for the priests.	12.127
*	With reluctance, Bhīṣma speaks of the "obscure" Law for situations of distress.	12.128

Reading the Map of Bhīṣma's Instructions on Kingship. The most significant features of Part 2 of the *RDh* are (1) the different degrees of integration before and after 12.90 that have already been discussed; (2) the large section dealing with violence (and nonviolence) between Chapters 93 and 107; (3) the appearance at the beginning of 12.108 of a detailed, though partial, summary of the *rājadharma* instructions up to that point; (4) the two appearances of a kind of coda—I refer to the thematic succession of texts exalting the honoring of one's parents followed by texts dealing with some aspect of *āpaddharma;* (5) the repetition, after the first occurrence of this putative coda, of a set of texts dealing with one of the central practical topics of the first half of the *RDh* instructions (I refer to 84n). These points lead to certain preliminary hypotheses about the history of the *RDh* collection of instructions as a whole, hypotheses that could be confirmed only through concerted research in conjunction with

other detailed investigations into the particular texts and their doctrines. These hypotheses are as follows: (1) That 12.67–90 constitute an original core of a course of *rājadharma* instruction; (2) that 12.60–66, 12.59, and 12.56–58 are later additions prepended to this core, all or some of them in connection with the transformation of this preexisting core into Bhīṣma's instruction of Yudhiṣṭhira in a *Great Bhārata;*[260] (3) that 12.91–92 and 12.93–107 were deliberately appended in conjunction with the creation of Bhīṣma's instruction of Yudhiṣṭhira as part of a *Great Bhārata;* (4) that a notion arose that the instruction in *rājadharma* should end with praise for devotion to one's *gurus*, primarily one's parents;[261] (5) that some treatment of *āpaddharma* should be appended to the instruction; (6) that chapters 108 (which summarizes the preceding instructions and treats a different kind of polity altogether [the *gaṇa*, the tribal republic or confederation, as opposed to the kingdom]) and 109 (the salute of parents) marked the formal end of the "first edition" of Bhīṣma's instruction of Yudhiṣṭhira as part of a *Great Bhārata;* (7) that 110–116 were appended to this instruction to deal with the obvious discrepancies between the ideals of dharma and the departures from it in the practices of some of the *santaḥ;* (8) that 116–126 is a kind of "follow-on" instruction in *rājadharma* that grew by the addition of texts subsequent to the "first edition" just suggested (perhaps these texts had at one time or another been gathered as a parallel *rājadharma* instruction); (9) that 127, which contains a strong statement about the importance of honoring one's parents, formed the conclusion of this secondary *Rājadharmaparvan;* and, finally, (10) that 128 was deliberately composed as an introduction to the topic of *āpaddharma* and to the full *Āpaddharmaparvan*, which was now formally appended to the *Rājadharmaparvan*. I will neither argue nor discuss this set of hypotheses further here. I suggest them for the consideration of interested scholars and as a starting point for further research into the structure and history of the collection.

The Āpaddharmaparvan

The subject of *āpaddharma* and the *Āpaddharmaparvan* pose a number of interesting problems that I can do no more than identify and briefly comment upon here. The very idea of *āpaddharma* ("the norms in times of exigency," which are actually "exceptions to dharmas in times of

260. I refer to the epic here as the *Great Bhārata* in order to remind scholars of the old arguments about a putative *Bhārata* epic and its alleged transformation into the *Mahā- or Great Bhārata*. I cannot enter into these large questions here, but obviously the facts I am pointing to and my hypotheses about them do presume some process of redaction which went from a shorter and simpler collection to a "greater" one. The simple distinction between *Bhārata* and *Great Bhārata* argues more than just this growth in this region of the epic, but that distinction is a not inappropriate emblem for the fact that the epic did grow diachronically in the period between the demise of the Mauryans and the rise of the Guptas.

261. Interestingly, this theme is one that Aśoka emphasized too in his edicts.

exigency") and the ideas associated with it are very interesting and complex. So too is the way the these ideas are present in the *MBh* generally. And, finally, the *Āpaddharmaparvan* is an interesting puzzle in itself. I first lay out the main aspects of the philosophy of *āpaddharma* and then turn to the *parvan* itself to discuss and map its texts. I do not explore how the theme of *āpaddharma* is present in the *MBh* generally, though I discuss one or two instances of its occurrence while developing the other topics.

***The Philosophy of* Āpaddharma.** The basic notion of *āpaddharma* involves behavior that is an exception to a requirement of dharma, a deviation from a particular rule that may still be regarded as a secondary form of the rule. Such exceptions are admissible because circumstances demanded the deviation for one reason or another, and the deviation can be handled as a mere exception according to one interpretive understanding or another. The most important treatments of the philosophy of *āpaddharma* are found in 12.110, 128, 130, 132, and 139–40. (Chapter 12.140 in particular contains a number of remarkable points about dharma and its determination.) If the idea of dharma and the rules of dharma are interesting social constructions, the notion of *āpaddharma* and its exceptions are even more so. This theme moves into such intriguing issues of ethics as hypocrisy, scandalous behavior on the part of the very teachers of dharma,[262] social and political intercourse with "barbarians" who are born outside of dharma,[263] and serious contention over how dharma is to be known and applied in the first place.[264]

More broadly conceived, the topic of *āpaddharma* embraces certain practical problems the advocates of dharma faced that threatened to undermine the credibility of their position: that is, glaring discrepancies between prescriptions of dharma and actual practice, or between prescriptions of dharma and consequences that glaringly conflicted with some principle which, in the instance, seemed more fundamental than

262. This subject is one of the subthemes of 12.130. Brahmins living among reprehensible people at a time when every occupation has been "barbarized" must resort to the "power of discrimination" (*vijñānabala;* see below) to retain their purity (i.e., they live by many exceptions to the dharmas, which they understand as allowable because of exigency). Such brahmins are not to be bothered (*na . . . yātayeta*, "harassed," or "vexed"; 12.130.9c) because of their apparently substandard observance of dharmas. No one can say anything against such wise men (130.6). The king should never listen to gossip (obviously the gossip of those reporting the brahmins' failings). The text moves into a discussion of brahmins as the standard of dharma and considers whether brahmins should ever be punished and, if so, how.

263. As noted in Part 2 (see p. 107f.), the particular actions that are dharma vary according to the kind of person one is, but they are all, in principle, based on the Vedas, and normally only the twice-born have access to the most Meritorious of them (see the interesting passage at 12.60.36–52, with my annotations). *MBh* 12.133 and 12.143–45 argue that barbarians can become Lawful people, and 12.139 depicts a Cāṇḍāla barbarian who lives barbarously, but who can quote Dharmaśāstra like a pandit.

264. Two of the most important chapters dealing with *āpaddharma*, 12.110 and 12.140, both contain strong condemnations of narrow-minded dharma-panditry.

the prescription. Examples of such discrepancies would be occasioning murder by telling the truth,[265] or the king's suffering ruin while honoring everyone's property rights.[266]

The word *āpad* signifies "bad or hard times," "period of distress," "dire circumstances," even "catastrophe or disaster" (a sometime synonym is *kṛcchra*), and there is a fairly widespread sense in the *MBh* that good people can do things during such times that would normally be considered wrong *(adharma)* and yet incur no permanent bad karma.[267] Discussing expiations at 12.35, Vyāsa tells Yudhiṣṭhira, "One who steals for the sake of his teacher in times of extreme need is not bound fast by the deed if he does not take much, does not take anything to gratify his own wishes, and does not make his living by it."[268] In his introduction, in 12.128, to the *Āpaddharma* collection soon coming up, Bhīṣma said, "Tradition teaches that during times of distress even what is Unlawful can have the attributes of Law."[269] And later in that same introduction he puts the point this way:

> [I]f one submits to the primary form of the Law, he may subsist by its secondary form. One who is in distress may live by what is not in accordance with the Laws. Indeed this is seen even among brahmins, when their proper livelihood has dried up. So what doubt could there be for a kṣatriya? . . . He [the king] should take it [the means of subsistence] from those that have more than he, he should never, not ever, sink into ruin.[270]

Dharma has primary forms and secondary forms, which have more latitude, for hard times. A bit later Bhīṣma refers to this same distinction this way: "Middling people follow the rule that one finds ready to hand without making any discriminations; the intelligent man follows something beyond that."[271] And in the remarkable 12.140 he laments,

> Why is it that the wisdom for someone weak [*durbala*, that is, someone with an incapacity deriving from a difficult situation] has not been declared before this?[272] He who has no awareness of what is twofold [someone "simple"-minded] is likely to be confounded when on a path that is twofold [the path of dharma, which, he is saying, differs according to capability]. It certainly should have been realized before now, Bhārata, that there are two levels of understanding *(buddhi)*. . . .

265. See the famous story of Kauśika told at 12.110.
266. See *MBh* 12.128.26cd: *ādadīta viśiṣṭebhyo nāvasīdet kathaṃ cana* //.
267. I use the English word *karma* to translate the Sanskrit usages *puṇyakarman* and, here, *pāpakarman* and their synonyms.
268. That is, he is not "bound fast by bad karma"; see *MBh* 12.35.23
269. See *MBh* 12.128.15: *āpady adharmo 'pi śrūyate dharmalakṣaṇaḥ*.
270. *MBh* 12.128.24–26.
271. *MBh* 12.130.8.
272. Shortly after making this point Bhīṣma goes on to excoriate narrow-minded approaches to dharma.

> A man must thoroughly understand—in this alternative way and in that alternative way—the Law which has been declared. Some have an understanding that is perfect; others have an understanding that is false. Taking this properly into account, one appropriates the teaching of those that are strictly virtuous.[273]

Though Bhīṣma argues forcefully here for this latitudinarian approach to dharma, he was not always so broad-minded. An instance from many years earlier in Bhīṣma's life provides a good example of the use of the relevant ideas. When Bhīṣma's stepbrother, the intended Bhārata dynast Vicitravīrya, died without a son, the Bhārata queen Satyavatī tried to persuade Bhīṣma to impregnate his dead brother's two widows, a practice known as *niyoga* (essentially the law of the levirate). Bhīṣma characterized her charge *(niyoga)* as "high dharma, without a doubt" *(asaṃśayaṃ paro dharmaḥ)*,[274] but he refused on the grounds of his earlier vow of celibacy. Satyavatī argued in response that the crisis (Bhīṣma was now the only surviving son of Śaṃtanu) warranted the invocation of *āpaddharma*, by which Bhīṣma could go back on his vow: "Look to the Law of Distress and carry the ancestral yoke. Act, scourge of your enemies, so that the thread of the lineage and Law itself will not be lost, and your kinsmen may rejoice."[275] As a final example I merely refer to the important story of Kauśika, in which an ascetic helps murderers kill their victim by failing to mislead them out of misguided scrupulosity for always speaking the truth.[276] In connection with this story Bhīṣma said, "This is the thing most difficult to understand in the whole world, that the truth should not be spoken and that falsehood should be spoken, where falsehood would be truth, or truth falsehood. Someone simple is dumbfounded in that circumstance where truth is not fixed. After coming to a considered discrimination between truth and falsehood, one becomes a real knower of Right."[277] Bhīṣma here echoes Vyāsa's sentiment at 12.34.20, "Some Right has the appearance of Wrong; the wise must realize that there is Right with the appearance of Wrong."[278]

These last two statements point to a critical element of the philosophy of *āpaddharma*, namely, being able, through the "power of discrimination" *(vijñānabala)*, to see how a "secondary form of a dharma" is appropriate in a particular situation.[279] Such insight is how a pious brahmin might live "pure" *(vijñānabalapūta)* amidst "reprehensible people" in a world overrun

273. *MBh* 12.140.7–10.
274. *MBh* 1.97.13a.
275. *MBh* 1.97.21cd–22ab, van Buitenen, 1: 231.
276. See *MBh* 12.110 with notes; a fuller version of the story is found at *MBh* 8.49.
277. *MBh* 12.110.4–5.
278. *MBh* 12.34.20.
279. The term *vijñānabala* is stressed in 12.130 and occurs again in 12.140. It is essentially the same as the *dharmanaipuṇa* (keen understanding of Law) Bhīṣma invokes at 12.128.19ab. The term *buddhi* (insight) also does this service upon occasion; for example, see 12.140.5–6: "Laws derived by means of intelligent insights" (*buddhisaṃjananam . . . dharmam*).

by barbarians.[280] This discrimination or understanding or insight (buddhi), of course, involves distinguishing between appearance and reality, one of the cornerstones of the entire notion and the basic theme of what we might call the proto-*Āpaddharmaparvan* that occurs in the *RDh* at 12.110–115. Another subtlety that discrimination or insight might grasp is to see that some principles of dharma are more important or more fundamental than others. In distress then, one must be sure to honor the more fundamental good. Bhīṣma justifies the argument that the sage Kauśika ought to have lied to the villains instead of uttering the absolute truth by pointing to what he claims, in 12.110, to be the purpose of dharma: "Law was declared to make creatures stronger, so Law would be something that involves doing no harm to beings."[281] In 12.128 Bhīṣma declared a different principle of priority—survival: "If one cannot survive upon any other way of life, then whatever way of life he does use to survive is consistent with his particular Lawful Duty *(svadharma)*."[282] Retaining his freedom and his survival, of course, are the fundamental principles for a king when faced with extreme political or military difficulties, and in the interests of such principles the king may flee the kingdom (12.129.6–8) or live in the forest among barbarians (12.131.10). Perhaps the best summation of this point is Bhīṣma's observation at 12.110.9, "What is Right in these cases is difficult to specify; it is determined by reasoning."[283]

Coupled with recommendations of this kind of sophistication are corresponding attacks on "strict-constructionist" advocates of dharma, those who, judging by Bhīṣma's attacks upon them, had a conservative and literalist approach to the interpretation and application of dharma to actual situations (men, perhaps, who would have insisted that Kauśika's telling the truth to the murderous thugs was the right thing to do regardless of the consequences). There is a brief attack upon learned hypocrisy in 12.110 (which follows Bhīṣma's discussion of the Kauśika tale) and another in 12.152. But it is Bhīṣma's discussion in 12.140 of the infamous example of Viśvāmitra's eating dog-meat when he was starving that contains the most elaborate of these attacks.

> The enemies of Law steal the Learned Teachings [*śāstras, dharmaśāstras*] and explain them as being harsh because their understandings of practical matters are nonsensical. The most wicked of men, these enemies of Law seek to live off of learning, and they lust for glory from every side. Foolish men with half-baked ideas *(apakvamatayo mandāḥ)*, ever unsophisticated in the Learned Teachings *(aśāstrakuśalāḥ)*, unaccomplished in everything they do, they do not understand correctly. Keeping in view only the wrongs that are taught in the Learned Teachings, they steal those teachings. Their understanding of the teachings goes, "That is not right." They make their own teachings known only by their criticism of the teachings of others. Having taken a mouthful of metal blades for words, they speak in sharp darts and arrows; they seem to have milked the cow of learning dry. Bharata, know them to be hawkers of learning who are like Rākṣasas. The whole known Law is mocked by them as a fraud. "We have learned from you no proclamation of Law, neither in word nor in spirit," so did Maghavan (Indra) himself say of Bṛhaspati's teaching.[284]

280. See *MBh* 12.130.6–8.

281. *MBh* 12.110.10: *prabhāvārthāya bhūtānāṃ dharmapravacanaṃ kṛtam / yat syād ahiṃsāsaṃyuktaṃ sa dharma iti niścayaḥ //*

282. See *MBh* 12.128.24: *svadharmānantarā vṛttir yānyān anupajīvataḥ*. The participle governing *anyān* (*vṛttīr*) expresses a negative condition, "(When, or if) not surviving upon other (means of subsistence)." Construe: *yā vṛttiḥ* (*rajño*) *'nyān* (*vṛttīr*) *anupajīvataḥ*, (*sā*) *svadharmānantarā*. The participle could also be construed as a genitive absolute, again with implicit *rajñaḥ*.

283. *MBh* 12.110.9: (*tādṛśo 'yam anupraśno yatra dharmaḥ sudurvacaḥ*) / *duṣkaraḥ pratisaṃkhyātuṃ tarkeṇātra vyavasyati* //.

This attack is followed by an alternative view (not fully clear) of how dharma is to be determined, a process that would make the resultant teachings of dharma more applicable to everyday life.

But perhaps the most forceful attack on learned hypocrisy occurs in the actual story of Viśvāmitra's eating the dog-meat in 12.139. The brahmin Viśvāmitra was starving during a famine,[285] and he ate dog-meat after seeing the hind-quarters of a dog hanging in the hut of a "disgusting" barbarian. But before he ate the meat, the story depicts him arguing Dharmaśāstra niceties at length with the barbarian owner of the meat. The "dog-cooking" Caṇḍāla argued the strictly orthodox Dharmaśāstra position to the brahmin, trying to dissuade the starving man from committing a great sin and ruining his accumulated Merit. Viśvāmitra countered these arguments with various considerations, ate the meat, survived, and later purified himself. The whole episode smacks of satire, and no element of it more so than its putting the details of Dharmaśāstra punditry into the mouth of a barbarian whose repulsive elements the text went out of its way to emphasize.

As Viśvāmitra's purifying himself after saving himself by resorting to an *āpaddharma* indicates, the themes of purification and expiation are not far away from *āpaddharma*. Several of the texts in the *Āpaddharmaparvan* deal with issues of expiation, including the portrayal of behavior that "has no expiation," the ingratitude of the Gautama brahmin of the final text of the *parvan*. In making another point of the newer dharma, 12.145.18 affirms that there is no expiation for one who attacks another who has taken refuge with him.

In addition to what has already been noted, the subject of *āpaddharma* was used to embrace a number of dilemmas that are often treated in

284. *MBh* 12.140.11–17.

285. It is interesting that it was Viśvāmitra who was chosen to star in this parable of *āpaddharma*, since he is a brahmin by virtue of his deeds and not his birth. It is hard to imagine Vasiṣṭha in this role!—though Agastya and Rāma Jāmadagnya would not have seemed odd either.

nītiśāstra, dilemmas of whom to trust, how soon to act in the face of pending hazard, how energetic need one really be, and so forth. Animal fables and parables are often used to dramatize these questions, and both the formal *Āpaddharmaparvan* and the *āpaddharma* section of the *Rājadharmaparvan* address several such questions of exigency.[286]

The* Āpaddharmaparvan *Itself. The *Āpaddharmaparvan* consists of twenty-seven texts in thirty-nine chapters. Its structure is even more relaxed than that of the second half of the *rājadharma* collection (12.91–128): it exhibits (only) three thematic groupings of texts at different locations in the collection,[287] and over a third of its chapters are contained in four texts. It has four multichapter framed texts,[288] one of which includes five chapters, and another, six. As noted above in connection with the *RDh*, larger framed items in the collection tend to diminish the sense of the Bhīṣma-Yudhiṣṭhira setting. As in the case of the *RDh*, these longer items tend not to occur in the first portion of the collection, but only in the middle or toward the back of the collection, after a (relatively) more tightly integrated beginning.

I have not imposed my own segmentation on this collection as I did for the *RDh;* instead I divide the text into subsections only when the framing of a multichapter text provides a warrant to do so. My segmentation of the *RDh* was a reluctant addition, and I perceived neither the need nor the same degree of justification to warrant doing so for the *ADh*. I do, however, provide two general maps to the collection here in the introduction.

***General Survey of the* Āpaddharmaparvan.** First I present the minor book as a whole (see Table 5). The main item to point out is that, like the *RDh*, the *ADh* includes a set of texts that anticipates the next anthology in the series of Bhīṣma's instructions, namely, the *mokṣadharma* collection. The six chapters 12.152–57 consider such questions as the root cause of evil deeds (greed, according to 12.152) and the very best behavior of Law (self-control, *dama*, according to 12.154), and they expound on such themes as the tremendous value and power of ascetic heat (*tapas*, in 12.155). These are *topoi* that properly belong in the upcoming *Mokṣadharmaparvan*, and their presence here suggests (as the presence of an *āpaddharma* section in the *Rājadharmaparvan* also suggested in that case) that the postulate was laid down at some point that the *RDh-ADh* succession should be followed with a *mokṣa* collection, and that we have both an earlier collection (the one contained in the *ADh*) and a later, formally separated, collection (the

286. *MBh* 12.111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 135, 136, 137, 141–5, 149, and 150–51.

287. Four texts on *nīti* themes at 12.135–38, two texts dealing with Viśvāmitra's eating dog meat at 12.139–40, and six texts on *mokṣa* themes at 12.152–57.

288. *MBh* 12.141–45, "The Conversation between the Pigeon and the Fowler"; 12.146–48, "The Story of King Janamejaya's Accidental Brahmicide"; 12.150–51, "The Conversation of the Wind and the *Śalmali* Tree (and Nārada)"; 12.162–67, "The Story of the Ungrateful Brahmin."

MDh itself), both in accordance with that postulate. The ADh contains two other broad segments, one before this proto-*Mokṣadharma* and one following it. Prior to 12.152 there is a variegated collection of texts that can all be seen as falling under the rubric of *āpad* in one way or another. The last ten chapters of this collection are mixed, treating aspects of *āpad* (12.159–60), laying down a formal foundation for Bhīṣma's *mokṣadharma* instructions, and closing with a long text that returns to the *āpad* theme in an interesting way.

Table 5. Broad Overview of the *Āpaddharmaparvan*

Section	Chapters	Number of Texts	Content
1.	129–151	16	Exceptions to the norms of dharma in times of stress
2.	152–157	6	*Mokṣadharma*
3.	158–167	5	Mixed: Three texts on *āpad* themes, one on *mokṣa*
Totals	39 chapters	27	

***A Closer View of the* Āpaddharmaparvan.** The philosophy of *āpaddharma* figures prominently in some of the texts of the *Āpaddharmaparvan* (typically, but not exclusively, in those that deal with brahmin behavior: 12.130, 132, 139–140), but the whole collection is not governed by those concepts in a simple way. Basically, the texts of the collection (with the exception of the *mokṣa* group at 12.152–57) all present some kind of exigency and present or discuss one or more responses to the exigency. Some of these texts are composed directly from the point of view of a king and offer advice to a king; others are more general. Some are simply concerned with the behavior of "ego" (the agent whose point of view is central to the particular narrative); others involve the presence of two layers of difficulty or problem—first, someone else's deviation from the primary norm of dharma, and second, ego's having to make exceptions or allowances to deal with the deviant. Some involve a philosophy of *āpaddharma* explicitly; others do not.

Most of the texts in Part 1 of the *ADh* (12.129–51) are composed with the king's point of view in mind, as was the norm for the *RDh*, and I present these texts first and discuss their connections to the concept of *āpaddharma.* These texts fall into two types: (1) Those which assimilate issues of *nīti* (ruling-policy) to *āpaddharma;* and (2) those in which the king must deal with behavior that departs from dharma on the part of two problematic groups with whom he must deal, brahmins and barbarians *(dasyus)*.

The initial text of the collection poses the dilemma of how a king should respond when faced with a superior enemy. The king in such a circumstance is forced to deviate from his norms in order to honor the fundamental principle that he survive. This text conflates issues of *nīti* and

āpaddharma along the lines sketched out by Bhīṣma in his introduction to the topic in 12.128 (the final text of the *RDh*). Other general issues of *nīti* are raised in a group of four other texts in the first part of the collection (12.135–38), but they are not explicitly cast in terms of *āpaddharma*. It seems they were included on the basis of implicit general parallelism—prudent policy in the face of particular difficulties.

The second of these two concerns in the first part of the collection (12.129–151) embraces various issues that may ultimately require the king to deviate from primary dharma in order to fulfill his obligations to sustain brahmins (in times of distress this support may require certain expropriations of property from the rest of his subjects) and to suppress barbarians with violence (there are indications of some inhibitions against doing so). Also, in the case of each of these two types, the king must deal with behavior that does not conform to dharma—deviant behavior on the part of degraded brahmins, on the one hand, and that of barbarians, on the other. The deviations from dharma of brahmins present political problems to the virtuous king (i.e., a king solicitous of brahmins), for he rules the rest of his people in terms of the dharma these very brahmins authorize and teach. Also, the issue of how brahmins may be punished for crimes has no simple answer. In these texts Bhīṣma discusses the king's various connections with each of these groups, and the status in dharma of each group is clarified: The potentially scandalous deviations of degraded brahmins are justified by the philosophy of *āpaddharma* and the various ways it may render acceptable what is otherwise proscribed. The *dasyus* present a different problem of deviance, which is not, in itself, a problem of *āpad:* They originally lie outside the realm of dharma, and they pose the question whether they can be brought within dharma or not (they can be). Their presence and their assimilation seem to have constituted a kind of *āpad* for some.

Many passages in the texts of the first part of this collection are far from clear, and it is possible that these texts have become garbled in the course of their transmission (my comment above [see p. 144] on the sub-*adhyāya* level of assembly of some texts is relevant here). For example, these texts bring issues of brahmins and *dasyus* together persistently, sometimes by alternation or interdigitation, but it is not clear exactly what tension between these two poles of dharma these texts had in mind. The first part of the collection affirms the necessity of the king's sustaining and protecting brahmins, even when their behavior is less than exemplary, and it also attacks some orthodox brahmins who fail to understand that dharma must be adaptable to varying circumstances. The same part of the collection also praises the acquired Lawfulness of some barbarians and even portrays a barbarian as able to preach Dharmaśāstra to Viśvāmitra (though this is probably satirical high jinks). We can only speculate on what actual situations stand behind these complications.

The five-chapter framed story of the "Conversation between the Pigeon and the Fowler" (12.141–45) emphatically develops the point made earlier that even barbarians can expiate their wicked way of life, undertake Lawful Meritorious Deeds (dharma), and go to heaven. So this text is continuous with those earlier pieces that were also concerned with barbarians and their assimilation to dharma. But while this text has this thematic connection to the first half of the collection, it has shifted into a different mood and is composed from a point of view different from the king's. The barbarian fowler was "converted" to dharma because his normal avian victims offered him unlimited assistance when he was in great distress, in spite of the fact that he was their mortal enemy. Besides building a fire to warm the drenched and freezing fowler, one of the birds also offered his body as food to save the man, and the bird's mate entered the fire after him. This unlimited altruism, a virtue of the newer dharma centered on yoga and *ahiṃsā* (see the discussion above in the section entitled, "Dharma and Kingship: Yudhiṣṭhira over Aśoka"), shamed the fowler and prompted him to repudiate his past way of life, seek expiation for his prior wickedness through asceticism, and undertake the Great Journey.[289]

The story of the fowler and the pigeons ended with Bhīṣma's pointing out that the barbarian's wickedness could be expiated, and at the same time he warned that there is no expiation for attacking a supplicant. Thus this fable has a complex point of view, as did 12.130, in which party A's deviation from the norm (there, degraded brahmins; here the fowler) poses a problem for party B (there, the king; here the birds). This fable would seem primarily intended to commend offering generous help to supplicants, no matter who the supplicant is. The force of the lesson is strengthened by the pigeon's infinite altruism toward his mortal enemy and by the striking result of the barbarian's "conversion" to dharma. The effect is further intensified by the paradox that lower orders of being demonstrate exemplary virtue toward humans.[290]

Concerns of the newer dharma dominate the *mokṣa* group of texts coming up at 12.152, but after a text in which the barbarian theme figured prominently, the collection makes its usual return to a theme centered upon brahmins. Here (in 12.146–48) a King Janamejaya, who has inadvertently killed a brahmin, seeks from the brahmin Indrota a means to expiate a sin which is often held to be expiable only by death.[291] The interactive, or bi-leveled, nature of *āpaddharma* issues noted above is dramatically indicated in this tale, for when the killer-king prostrated himself at Indrota's feet and began massaging the brahmin's feet as a sign

289. See the second note to 11.1.20.

290. Those familiar with the famous tale of King Śibi's offering his own flesh to a hawk in lieu of the flesh of a dove to whom the king had given refuge will enjoy comparing these two tales and their inversions. The widespread Śibi story occurs in the *MBh* at 3.131, van Buitenen 2: 470–72.

291. See the note to 12.146.4.

of subservience, the brahmin recoiled in anger and scolded him for daring to touch a brahmin when he, the king, was so unclean. But the brahmin then acquiesced to the king's pleas to assign him an expiation. Indrota briefly explained his reasons for doing so and, giving another indication of how contentious this collection is,[292] also noted that some would criticize him for bringing this brahmicide back to the status of a legitimate doer of Meritorious, Lawful Deeds.

These two optimistic texts emphasizing the transformations that are possible in evil-doers are followed by another optimistic text (12.149) that is otherwise unique in the collection. A family grieving over the loss of a son was sorely harassed by turns on the burning ground, first by a vulture, who wanted them to leave the boy (so he could have his meal), and then by a jackal, who urged them to guard the boy until sunset (at which time he would then go about his nocturnal feeding). Finally, Śiva intervened and brought the boy back to life. This story does not seem to fit the *āpaddharma* rubric very well at all. All that can be said is that it does indeed teach the "norm" (dharma) of never giving up hope of a miracle at times of great difficulty *(āpad)*.

Finally the pre-*mokṣa* portion of the *ADh* collection ends with a parable offering the *nīti* admonition to take proper cognizance of another's superior strength. A large *śalmali* tree[293] boasted of its superiority to the power of the wind, but then humiliated itself ridiculously. The basic *āpad* here, of course, is the danger the wind poses to trees. But the story also has another layer, in which we participate in the wind's point of view and are faced with the difficulty posed by the *śalmali* tree's haughtiness. How should one respond to such blustery behavior? This question is not really developed here, but it is parallel to the theme of the first text (12.158) on the other side of the *mokṣa* collection.

I have already given a brief indication of the contents of the *mokṣa* collection. I will only add here that it begins with a question that is quite appropriate to the context: "What is the source of evil deeds?"[294] It then moves to the same question about the equally appropriate topic of ignorance (12.153). From there, however, it moves on to less relevant topics such as praise of self-control *(dama)* and asceticism.[295]

Aside from the *mokṣa* texts, the theme of expiation is the single most prominent theme in the latter part of the collection (really from 12.141 onward). Expiation is a major topic in six of the nine non-*mokṣa* texts between the story of the pigeons and the fowler (12.141–45) and the end of

292. Most often in the collection, particular positions are merely asserted, or juxtaposed, without the explicit registration of significant contention that we see here.

293. *Salmalia malabarica* Schott et Endl.; see the note to 12.150.1.

294. *MBh* 12.152.1.

295. One of the lines of continuity between the *mokṣa* topic and the *rājadharma* with its *āpaddharma* extension is that the *mokṣa* topic is the main place where the new dharma virtues that are now demanded of kṣatriyas (and their opposite vices) are discussed in the foreground.

the collection at 12.162–67. Several of these texts deal straightforwardly with the theme of expiation as a means to recover from some violation of dharma, but three of them consider some particular form of behavior (only one of which—that of the Gautama brahmin described in the final text, 12.162–67—is actually a matter of *āpad* behavior) and pass the judgment that such behavior shall *not* be tolerated by those who are good. The behavior does *not* constitute a valid exception to a dharma. (In Table 6 below I label the theme of these texts "unexceptionable behavior.") The first of these is 12.158, which is concerned with how a good person relates to the difficulties another person poses. Here the *āpad* is suffered by ego when ego witnesses another person's viciousness, or unkindness *(ānṛśaṃsya)*. The text advises ego simply to avoid such a person. One of the implications of the scene is that the vicious person's behavior is not redeemable, not expiable, is not an *āpaddharma*, is not to be tolerated. This theme is how I understand the otherwise baffling inclusion of the history of the sword, which was born from the ritual fire at a sacrifice of Brahmā's for the express purpose of slaying the Asuras. Neither the theme of *āpaddharma* nor that of expiation is raised explicitly in this text, but the point of the text is the use of a divinely created weapon to eliminate a group whose behavior is not to be tolerated. The situation described in this text is similar to the situation of the *dasyus* (barbarians) treated earlier in the collection, but where some barbarians assimilate to rules of dharma and escape annihilation, the opposite holds true of the Asuras. The sword was made for situations where people are beyond even *āpaddharma*.

Table 6 offers a closer view of the collection in terms of its substantive themes.

Table 6. Closer View of the Twenty-seven Texts of the *Āpaddharmaparvan*

Subtheme	Title or Contents	Chapters
nīti	What the king can do when the enemy threatening him is much more powerful	12.129
Brahmins	The special situation of brahmins in degraded times; the importance of the "power of insight"	12.130
dasyus	Relations with barbarian tribes, bringing them under law	12.131
Brahmins	The king needs Law (and brahmins) always.	12.132
dasyus	Even barbarians can become Lawful.	12.133
Brahmins and *dasyus*	Royal "treasure" is wealth expropriated from *dasyus* and nonritualists and transferred to ritualists or used for their benefit.	12.134
nīti	Parable on foreseeing danger and acting in good time to avoid it	12.135

(continued)

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Table 6. *(continued)*

Subtheme	Title or Contents	Chapters
nīti	Parable on the pragmatic and transitory nature of alliances	12.136
nīti	Parable on certain enmities which are permanent	12.137
nīti	General wisdom on a king's prospering	12.138
Brahmins and *dasyus*	Against the (basically correct) dharma-advice of a barbarian, the brahmin Viśvāmitra eats dog-flesh during a time of famine.	12.139
Brahmins and *dasyus*	Bhīṣma justifies Viśvāmitra's exception, argues the necessity of the "insight," condemns hypocritical brahmins who lack practical sense and make dharma into an object of scorn, commands Yudhiṣṭhira to imitate Viśvāmitra's "fierceness" in coercing barbarians to live according to dharma.	12.140
dasyus, altruism, expiation	(85a) Parable of the pigeons and the barbarian fowler: Exemplifies ultimate altruism even for one's mortal enemy when he is in need; demonstrates that barbarians can leave their vicious ways, expiate their evils, and perform Meritorious Law	12.141–45
Brahmins, expiation	(85b) King Janamejaya's brahmicide: Inadvertent sins can be expiated, even brahmicide (though some authorities will not agree).	12.146–48
Optimism	Story ultimately illustrating that Śiva's power always provides grounds for optimism, even when a beloved child is dead	12.149
nīti	(85c) Parable counseling humility before superior power	12.150–51
mokṣa	Six texts on various subthemes of *mokṣa*	12.152–57
Unexceptionable behavior	Vicious men are intractable, and one should simply avoid them.	12.158
Brahmins and expiations	Problematic behavior among brahmins and other Aryans and the expiations for them	12.159
Unexceptionable behavior	Bhīṣma tells Nakula how the sword was produced from the fire at a sacrifice done by Brahmā to relieve the Gods of the burden of the Law-flaunting Asuras; how it passed to Rudra and others down to the Pāṇḍavas.	12.160
mokṣa	Speaking to his brothers, Yudhiṣṭhira praises *mokṣa* over the other *puruṣārthas.*	12.161
Unexceptionable behavior	(85d) Parable arguing that ingratitude has no expiation while also demonstrating the noble altruism of dharma	12.162–67

Contents

12(84) *The Laws for Kings*

12.1–128 (B. 1–130; C. 1–4778)

Part 1: Yudhiṣṭhira Becomes King of the Bharatas

12.1–55 (B. 1–55; C. 1–1986)

1 (1; 1). While Yudhiṣṭhira and his party remain by the Gaṅgā River following the funeral rites for their dead kinsmen, several brahmin seers and thousands of brahmins gather round Yudhiṣṭhira. The brahmin seer Nārada congratulates Yudhiṣṭhira on his victory (1–15). But Yudhiṣṭhira is overwhelmed by grief at the slaughter. He laments especially the unwitting killing of his mother's eldest son, Karṇa (15–25). He recounts Pṛthā's attempts to join Karṇa with the Pāṇḍavas and mourns him more (25–40). He asks Nārada to explain why Karṇa had been cursed (40).

2–5 (B. 2–5; C. 46–143) (84a) The Doom of Karṇa.

6 (6; 144). After Nārada finishes, Kuntī confirms that she had tried to persuade Karṇa to unite with the Pāṇḍavas. Having failed, she turned her back on him (1–5). Blaming Kuntī's secrecy for the intensity of his grief, Yudhiṣṭhira

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curses women everywhere to be unable to keep secrets. Yudhiṣṭhira's grief deepens, and he becomes radically disaffected from everything (10).

12.7–19 (B. 7–19; C. 157–600) (84b) The Persuasion of Yudhiṣṭhira, Part 1: The Family.

12.20–38 (B. 20–37; C. 601–1392) (84c) The Persuasion of Yudhiṣṭhira, Part 2: The Seers and Kṛṣṇa Vāsudeva.

12.39–44 (B. 38–44; C. 1393–1531) (84d) Yudhiṣṭhira the King in Hāstinapura.

12.45–55 (B. 45–55; C. 1532–1986) (84e) Kṛṣṇa Vāsudeva Inaugurates Bhīṣma's Instruction of Yudhiṣṭhira.

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

12.1.1 After° the sons of Pāṇḍu—and Vidura and Dhṛtarāṣṭra and all the Bharata women—poured the funeral waters for all of their friends and allies, those highly exalted descendants of Kuru stayed there outside the city* for a month to become clean again.°

The most venerable brahmin seers, exalted sages who had reached the highest attainment, came to Yudhiṣṭhira after the king, mindful of Law, had poured the funeral libations. There were Dvaipāyana and Nārada, the great seer Devala, and Devasthāna and Kaṇva, and their best pupils. And other sophisticated brahmins learned in the Vedas—householders who had completed the course of Vedic learning—came too, and they all gazed upon Yudhiṣṭhira, the most excellent of the Kurus. As those exalted seers approached him, Yudhiṣṭhira paid them respect in the prescribed way, and then they sat upon very costly seats. They received from Yudhiṣṭhira a respectful reception in keeping with the circumstances and then properly sat in attendance in a circle around him. There on the bank of the holy Bhāgīrathī† brahmins by the hundreds and thousands comforted and encouraged the king,° who was out of his mind with burning grief.

After a while, when he had consulted with the other sages, Nārada spoke to Yudhiṣṭhira, who was scrupulously devoted to Law, words that fit the time. "My good Yudhiṣṭhira,° you conquered this whole earth through the power of your two arms and by the favor of Mādhava,‡ and you did so

* = Hāstinapura, the City of the Elephant.
† = the Gaṅgā River.
‡ = Kṛṣṇa.

Lawfully. Fortunately you all escaped from this war that terrified the world. Though you were passionately caught up in the Law of *kṣatra,** O son of Pāṇḍu, I hope you feel like celebrating now. And now that your enemies have been cut down, I hope you cheer your friends. I hope that grief does not hold you back, now that you have gained this Royal Splendor."°

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

I have conquered this whole earth by relying on the strength of Kṛṣṇa's arms, the favor of the brahmins, and the strength of Bhīma and Arjuna. But ever since finishing this tremendous extermination of my kinsmen that was ultimately caused by my greed, a terrible pain aches in my heart without stopping. I caused the slaughter of Subhadrā's son† and Draupadī's dear sons. So, blessed one, this victory looks more like defeat to me. What is my Vṛṣṇi sister-in-law in Dvārakā‡ going to say to Kṛṣṇa, Slayer of Madhu, when Hari§ returns there? And poor Draupadī here pains me even more! She was always devoted to our welfare and our pleasure, and now her sons have been slaughtered! And her kinsmen too! And there is something else I will tell you, blessed Nārada. I have been burdened with sorrow by my mother Kuntī, who kept this secret to herself.°

That one with the might of a myriad elephants, who had no equal in the world as a chariot warrior, who swayed like a lion when he walked; that one who was wise, warm, self-controlled, and firm in his resolves; that one who was the proud anchor of the Dhārtarāṣṭras; the intensely aggressive, unforgiving, constantly furious one who hurled swift shots at us in battle after battle; an expert in different kinds of fighting who was wonderfully courageous—Kuntī told us, when we were pouring the funeral libations, that he was her son born in secret, fathered by the Sun! He was our brother born of the same womb! Cast upon the waters long ago, though he was born with all good features, the one everyone knew as the son of the *sūta* and his wife Rādhā—he was Kuntī's eldest son! Our brother! The son of our mother! Unaware of this, I caused his death in war because I craved the kingdom. This burns every limb of my body like fire racing through a pile of straw.°

Not even that son of Pṛthā who drives the white horses‖ knew that he was our brother. Nor did I, nor Bhīma, nor the twins. But that firmly resolute man knew us! We were told that Pṛthā# approached him and tried to reconcile him with us.** She told him, "You are my son." We were told that exalted one did not do what Pṛthā wanted, that he told his mother, "It is too late. I cannot abandon King Duryodhana in war. It would be shameful, cruel, and ungrateful of me to ally myself with Yudhiṣṭhira as

* = (here) waging war. † = Abhimanyu.
‡ Subhadrā, sister of Kṛṣṇa and mother of Abhimanyu, is currently staying in Dvārakā, the Vṛṣṇi city in the west.
§ = Kṛṣṇa. ‖ = Arjuna. # = Kuntī.
** Kuntī's approach to Karṇa is related at 5.143–44; see also 5.138–42.

you suggest. People would think I was scared of the warrior who drives the white horses. I will make peace with the son of Dharma* after I have defeated Vijaya† and Keśava‡ in battle." And we heard that Pṛthā spoke to the broad-chested Karṇa again, "Fight Phalguna§ if you like, but leave the other four safe." Trembling, folding his hands in respect, the wise Karṇa said to his mother, "When I come upon those four sons of yours whom I can fend off, I will not kill them. It is certain, mother, that you will still have five sons: With Karṇa, if the son of Pṛthā is killed,° or with Arjuna, if I am killed." Pleading desperately for her sons,° that mother spoke to her son again, "May you please ensure the safety of those of your brothers whose safety you are willing to grant."

Having told him this, Pṛthā dismissed him and went home. That hero was killed by Arjuna—a brother killed by a brother from the same womb! O sage, neither he nor Pṛthā disclosed the secret, and that great and mighty warrior was cut down by the son of Pṛthā. O best of brahmins, only later, when Pṛthā announced it, did I learn that Karṇa was my elder brother born of the same womb. My heart burns furiously because I caused my brother to be killed. With Karṇa and Arjuna beside me I could have conquered even Vāsava!‖

When Dhṛtarāṣṭra's wicked sons were tormenting me in the assembly hall, my anger suddenly cooled when I looked at Karṇa. As I had listened to him speaking then, encouraging Duryodhana in the dicing match, his rough words had made me bitter. But my anger vanished when I noticed his feet.° "Karṇa's feet resemble Kuntī's," I thought. I wondered what reason there could be for this resemblance between him and Pṛthā, but I could imagine no reason, no matter how I thought about it.

Why did the earth swallow up the wheel of his chariot during the battle? Why was my brother cursed? Please tell me the truth of this here and now. Blessed one, I want to hear the whole story from you truly and exactly. For you, blessed one, possess all learning and you know what has been done and what has not been done in this world.

12(84a) The Doom of Karṇa

2–5 (B. 2–5; C. 46–143)

2 (2; 46). Nārada tells Karṇa's story, beginning with Karṇa's extraordinary origin (1). While he and they are students of Droṇa, Karṇa becomes jealous of the Pāṇḍavas and requests

* = Yudhiṣṭhira. † = Arjuna. ‡ = Kṛṣṇa.
§ = Arjuna. ‖ = Indra.

that Droṇa teach him the brahman-*shot. Droṇa refuses, telling Karṇa that only a brahmin or a kṣatriya may learn that weapon (5–10). Karṇa goes off to Mahendra mountain to seek the missile from another brahmin warrior, the Bhārgava Rāma. Karṇa lies, telling Rāma that he is a Bhārgava brahmin, and Rāma accepts him as a pupil in his hermitage. Karṇa learns many arrows and missiles and becomes fast friends with the orders of nonhuman beings (10–15). Karṇa accidentally kills the milk cow of an Agnihotri brahmin. He informs the brahmin, stressing the accidental nature of this killing. The brahmin lays upon Karṇa the curse that the earth will someday swallow up his chariot wheel as he makes war, and then, while his attention is otherwise occupied, an enemy will rush him and decapitate him. Karṇa vainly attempts to attenuate the force of the curse (15–25).*

3 (3; 75). Rāma is well satisfied with Karṇa as a pupil and teaches him the brahman-*shot. Karṇa stays in the hermitage (1). Once, on an outing with his teacher, Karṇa does not flinch when bitten repeatedly by an insect, and so displays to his teacher that he is not really a brahmin (1–10). The insect turns out to be the Rākṣasa Prāggṛtsa, an Asura cursed in the past by Rāma's ancestor Bhṛgu. He has been awaiting an encounter with Rāma to bring an end to the curse (10–20). Angry at Karṇa's deception, Rāma curses him to forget the missile when he will need it most and dismisses him. Karṇa returns to Duryodhana (20–30).*

4 (4; 108). Hundreds of kings gather in Citrāṅgada's royal city in Kaliṅga for a svayaṃvara. *Duryodhana goes, taking Karṇa with him (1–5). As she reviews the gathered kings, the princess passes Duryodhana by. Insulted, Duryodhana forces her into his chariot and challenges the gathered kings to stop him (5–10). In the ensuing melée Karṇa thoroughly routs the pursuing kings and then escorts Duryodhana home (15–20).*

5 (5; 129). Jarāsaṃdha of Māgadha challenges Karṇa to a chariot duel. They fight, and Karṇa wins. Jarāsaṃdha submits with pleasure and gives Karṇa the city Mālinī, which he rules in subordination to Duryodhana (1–5). Mentioning other salient details of Karṇa's life and death, Nārada sums up Karṇa as brilliantly endowed, cursed, and betrayed, but counsels Yudhiṣṭhira not to grieve for him (5–15).

Vaiśampāyana said:

2.1 The sage Nārada, the best of speakers, then told the whole story of how the son of the *sūta** had been cursed.

"It was as you say, strong-armed Bhārata; nothing whatsoever could have stood against Karṇa and Arjuna in battle. I will tell you this secret of the Gods. Pay attention, great king, to how this happened some time ago.

"How does a kṣatriya go to heaven? 'Purified by the blade,' lord.

5 "Born of friction and for friction,° the baby was formed in a virgin. The boy possessed great brilliance, and he became the son of a *sūta*. He learned the Veda of the Bow from your own teacher, the most excellent of the Aṅgirases.† He burned within as he brooded upon Bhīmasena's might, Phalguna's‡ skill, your intellect, the twins' sense of propriety, the Gāṇḍīva bowman's childhood friendship with Vāsudeva,§ and the affection all in the kingdom had for you. Both because it was fated and because of the natural course of things, he became King Duryodhana's friend in childhood and always bore a grudge against all of you.

"Karṇa noticed Dhanaṃjaya's superior mastery of the Veda of the Bow, 10 and he approached Droṇa privately and said, 'I want to know the *brahman*-shot° and the secret of calling it back. My intention is to be the equal of Arjuna in war. Surely you have the same affection for all the boys who are your pupils. If you grant this wish, the experts will not be able to say that I am not an accomplished shot.'

"But Droṇa was looking out for Phalguna and he was aware of Karṇa's wickedness. So he replied, 'A brahmin who has correctly performed the right vow may learn the *brahman*-shot, or a kṣatriya who has performed asceticism. No one else at all can learn it.' Karṇa then paid homage to the best of the Aṅgirases, took leave of him, and went directly to Rāma‖ at 15 Mount Mahendra. When he found Rāma, he bowed his head low before him and then approached him reverently, saying, 'I am a Bhārgava brahmin.' Rāma questioned him thoroughly about his *gotra* and so forth, and he then accepted him, saying, 'Stay here. Welcome to you.' Rāma came to like him very much. While he lived there on Mahendra, the best of mountains, Karṇa associated with Gandharvas, Rākṣasas, Yakṣas, and Gods. And while there he learned arrows and missiles from the most excellent of the Bhṛgus exactly as they are prescribed. And the Gods, Gandharvas, and Rākṣasas came to have boundless affection for him.

"One time that *sūta's* son went off by himself and wandered about the 20 fringes of the hermitage, near the ocean, carrying his sword and bow. O

* = Karṇa, the foundling son of the *sūta* Adhiratha.
† = Droṇa.
‡ = Arjuna (also referred to as "the Gāṇḍīva bowman" in what follows).
§ = Kṛṣṇa.
‖ = Rāma Jāmadagnya; see the endnote for 2.14.

Son of Pṛthā,* without realizing it, he happened to kill the cow that provided the milk for the ritual offerings of a brahmin devoted to reciting the Veda and performing the Agnihotra sacrifice. Relying on the idea that he had done it without knowing what he was doing,° Karṇa informed the brahmin, trying to placate him by saying, 'Blessed one, I unintentionally killed your cow. Forgive me for this.' He said this over and over, but the brahmin was furious and said to him rather menacingly, 'You deserve to be killed, you wicked man! You must take the consequences of this, you stupid dolt. The earth will swallow up the wheel of your chariot, you wicked man, when you are fighting against the rival with whom you always vie, on 25 account of whom you exert yourself without rest. And when the earth has swallowed your wheel, your enemy will attack you and lop off your stupid head while you are distracted.° Go, you vile man. Since you heedlessly killed my cow, you fool, so will another lop off your head as you are heedless of him.' Karṇa tried to placate that most virtuous of brahmins once again—with cattle, riches, and jewels—but that one said to him, 'No one in the world could nullify what I have pronounced. Go. Stay. Do what you have to do.' After the brahmin told him this, Karṇa was depressed and hung his head. He went back to Rāma, frightened as he turned this over in his mind."

Nārada said:

3.1 The tiger of the Bhṛgus† was satisfied with the strength in Karṇa's arms, his humility, his self-control, and his obedience. So the one ascetic solemnly proclaimed to the other ascetic the whole of the *brahman*-shot and how to call it back, just as they are prescribed. Karṇa stayed on in the Bhṛgu's hermitage after he learned that shot and worked at the Veda of the Bow with marvelous intensity.

One time Rāma was roaming about with Karṇa in the vicinity of the 5 hermitage when that wise one became weak because of his fasting. With the easy intimacy of a friend, the sleepy teacher Jāmadagnya laid his head in Karṇa's lap and fell asleep. After a while a dreadful insect with a dreadful sting, an insect made of mucus that feeds on flesh and blood, came near Karṇa. It got onto Karṇa's thigh, bit into it, and sucked his blood. Karṇa could not flick it off or kill it, for fear of his teacher. So, Bhārata, the *sūta's* son ignored that bug even as it bit him hard and repeatedly,° as he was afraid of waking his teacher. Karṇa stifled the intolerable pain with his fortitude, and not moving in the least, he supported the Bhārgava without 10 disturbing him. But when blood trickled onto one of the limbs of his body, that fiery scion of Bhṛgu awoke and, blazing with anger, he said, "Ayeiii! I'm polluted! What have you done here? Forget your fear and tell me exactly

* = Yudhiṣṭhira, addressed by Nārada.
† = Rāma Jāmadagnya.

what this is." Karṇa then told him about the insect's feeding on him. Rāma then saw that bug and it looked like a pig. It had eight legs and sharp teeth; its body was completely covered with hair, and it looked like it had sharp spikes sticking out all over. It was what is called an *alarka.* As soon as Rāma looked at it the insect expired.

15 Then, as it lay there saturated with blood, something of a marvel took place. A motley Rākṣasa appeared in the sky, riding upon a cloud.° Its mouth was gaping, and fangs protruded from it; its neck was red, and its body was black. Folding his hands in supplication to Rāma, and brimming with satisfaction, the Rākṣasa spoke to him. "Good fortune to you, tiger of the Bhṛgus. I will go just as I came. You sir, the most excellent of hermits, have released me from hell. You sir, have done me a favor. May you have good luck, and joy." The sternly majestic, strong-armed Jāmadagnya said, "Who are you? And why did you go to hell? Tell me that." The Rākṣasa said, "I was a great Asura called Prāggṛtsa. Long ago in the Age of the

20 Gods, son, I was about the same age as Bhṛgu and I carried off his dear wife by force. The great seer cursed me, and I became an insect and fell to the earth. In his anger your great-grandfather* went on to say, 'You will go to hell, wicked one, and feed upon urine and mucus.' I told him, 'There should be some end to this curse, brahmin.' And Bhṛgu said, 'It will end with the Bhārgava Rāma.' So this is the state I've come to, sorry as it is. But having met up with you, holy man, I am now freed from that vile existence." The great Asura then paid obeisance to Rāma and went off.

25 But then Rāma spoke angrily to Karṇa. "You mixed up fool, no brahmin could endure this extreme pain. Your fortitude could only be a kṣatriya's. Be pleased to speak the truth." Fearing a curse, Karṇa tried to placate Rāma, "Bhārgava, you must realize that I was born a *sūta,* right in between brahmin and kṣatriya. People down on the earth call me Karṇa, son of Rādhā. Forgive me, brahmin, I just had to learn that missile. One's teacher, the master who hands over the Vedas and special knowledge, is a father, no doubt of it. So I said I was a Bhārgava° when I told you my *gotra.*" Karṇa, devastated, had fallen to the ground, where he was trembling, his hands folded in supplication. With the trace of a smile that foremost Bhṛgu

30 answered him angrily. "Since your craving for it led you to behave falsely, you mixed up fool, you will remember this *brahman*-shot at all times except the moment when you will be killed, having joined battle with one like yourself. For the *brahman*† never remains fixed in one who is not a brahmin. Go now. Since you have lied, there is no place for you here. There will never be a kṣatriya on earth the like of you in fighting."

After Rāma said this to him, Karṇa duly approached Duryodhana and told him, "I have learned the missile."

* = Bhṛgu. † = the Veda.

Nārada said:

4.1 O bull of the Bharatas, Karṇa and Duryodhana rejoiced after Karṇa got the missile from that scion of the Bhṛgu line. Sometime after that, king, kings gathered together for a *svayaṃvara* in Kaliṅga, the realm of King Citrāṅgada. O Bhārata, for the sake of a girl, kings by the hundreds came together in that splendidly rich city called Rājapura.* Duryodhana heard that all kings were gathering there and he went there

5 with Karṇa in a golden chariot. O best of kings, as the great *svayaṃvara* festival got underway, the kings congregated, hoping to win the girl. Śiśupāla, Jarāsaṃdha, Bhīṣmaka, Vakra, Kapotaroman, Nīla, Rukmin, Dṛḍhavikrama, Sṛgāla (who was the overlord of a kingdom of women°), Aśoka, Śatadhanvan, Bhoja, Vīra, . . . these and many other kings from the south, the east, and the north, and barbarian "preceptor-kings"° as well, Bhārata. They were all wearing golden bracelets and garlands with gold attached. Their bodies shone brilliantly, and they were all furiously excited like tigers.

10 When those kings were all seated, the girl came before her audience accompanied by eunuchs° and her nurse. While the names of the kings were being called off, the fair-skinned girl passed Duryodhana by. Now Duryodhana Kauravya did not abide her skipping him. Insulting those kings, he stopped the girl. With manly pride and lust raging within him, and counting on the support of Bhīṣma and Droṇa, he forced her onto his chariot and called out a challenge to the kings. His charioteer, Karṇa, the best of those who bear arms, followed behind him with a sword, his arm and finger guards lashed in place.

15 Then, Yudhiṣṭhira, there was a huge battle of kings. "Tie my armor on! Hitch my chariot up!" Outraged, they rushed after Duryodhana and Karṇa, raining showers of arrows upon them, like storm clouds over two mountains. As the kings rushed upon them, Karṇa, one by one, shot their bows, arrows, and hand guards° to the ground with the razor-barbs on his arrows. Karṇa, the very best shot, threw those kings into disarray with the easy deftness of his shooting—some of them had no bows and others had bows at the ready, while others were marshaling their arrows, chariots, spears, or clubs—and he conquered them all, having killed most of their

20 charioteers. Their spirits broken, those kings quit the battle and flew off, speeding their horses themselves, shouting "Go! Go!"

But Duryodhana was thrilled, and escorted by Karṇa, he took the girl back with him to the City of the Elephant.†

Nārada said:

5.1 When he comprehended the might Karṇa had shown, the Māgadhan king Jarāsaṃdha challenged him to a chariot duel. There was a battle between them. They both knew divine missiles, and they showered each

* = "The city of the king." † = Nāgasāhvaya, i.e., Hāstinapura.

other with diverse weapons. When their arrows were exhausted, their bows gone, their swords broken, and they were on foot, those mighty men grappled arm to arm. Using the "Thorny" mode of wrestling, Karṇa shattered the other's aged body. When he saw his body broken, the king abandoned his hostility toward Karṇa and told him, "I am pleased with you." Out of this affection he gave Karṇa the city Mālinī. Having conquered his rival, Karṇa became king in Aṅga. That harasser of enemy armies ruled Campā[*] with Duryodhana's permission, as you know, Bhārata. And Karṇa became famous all over the earth because of his brilliance with weapons.

To secure your welfare the chief of the Gods[†] begged of Karṇa the armor and the earrings which were on his body at birth.[‡] Confused by the God's power of illusion, Karṇa gave him those marvelous, supremely dazzling earrings and that innate armor. Deprived of those earrings and the armor, he was killed by Vijaya[§] in battle while Vāsudeva watched.

Because of the curse of the exalted brahmin Rāma, because he granted Kuntī's wish,[‖] because of Śatakratu's[#] power of illusion, because of Bhīṣma's contempt for him,[**] because he was given only half a mention in the enumeration of the warriors,[††] because Śalya snuffed out his inner fire,[‡‡] and because of Vāsudeva's tactics[§§] Karṇa Vaikartana,° whose brilliance was equal to that of the Sun, was killed in battle by the Gāṇḍīva bowman[‖‖] who had received celestial missiles from Rudra,[##] from the King of the Gods,[***] from Yama, Varuṇa, and Kubera,[†††] as well as Droṇa and the exalted Kṛpa.

So your brother was cursed, and many were crooked in their dealings with him. You should not grieve for that tiger of a man, for he went to his end in battle.

12(84) The Laws for Kings: Part 1 (continued)

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

6.1 With this the divine seer Nārada stopped speaking, but the royal seer Yudhiṣṭhira, overwhelmed with grief, was sunk in thought. Kuntī, beside herself with pain, her whole body wracked with burning grief, spoke to

* = Mālinī. † = Indra. ‡ See s.v. "Karṇa" in the LCP.
§ = Arjuna. ‖ See above, 12.1.25 ff. # = Indra.
** See 5.48.27–31, 5.61.1–18, and 5.153.23–25.
†† See 5.165.3–27. ‡‡ See 8.26–30.
§§ A reference to Kṛṣṇa's manipulation of Ghaṭotkaca in the night battle on the fourteenth day of the war; see 7.148.31 ff. and 7.155–57.
‖‖ = Arjuna. ## = Śiva; see *MBh* 3.40–41. *** = Indra; see *MBh* 3.38.
††† See *MBh* 3.42.

that tormented hero sunk in depression, his head hanging down, his eyes filled with tears, his breath hissing like a snake. Speaking sweetly, she made this apt statement. "Strong-armed Yudhiṣṭhira, you should not grieve for him. You who are so very wise, let go of your grief. Listen to what I have to say! O best of those who support Law, I did try earlier to get him to reveal to you that you were brothers, and so did his father, the Sun. Before me, in a dream, the Sun told him what a friend who desired his welfare and wanted him to prosper might say to him. With our appeals to affection, neither the Sun nor I could persuade him or lead him to unite with you. So, completely hemmed in by Time, he was absorbed in fanning the fire of hostility. He was disposed against you, so I ignored him."

After his mother said this, the King of Law's eyes filled with tears. His mind addled with grief, he made this pronouncement because of his devotion to Law:° "I am severely pained now because you, good lady, kept this information secret." Tormented too much, that one blazing with energy cursed women everywhere: "They will not keep secrets."

The king's heart was troubled as he recalled sons and grandsons, friends and kinsmen. His mind was deranged. Then, tormented with regrets, his soul immersed in grief like a fire choked with smoke, the wise king despaired.°

12(84b) The Persuasion of Yudhiṣṭhira, Part 1: The Family

12.7–19 (B. 7–19; C. 157–600)
7 (7; 157). Yudhiṣṭhira raves at Arjuna about the results of the war, condemns the kṣatriya ethos and the Pāṇḍavas' participation in it, and praises the virtues cultivated by forest-dwellers (1–10). Yudhiṣṭhira movingly laments the fallen heroes from the perspective of a parent (10–15). He goes on defensively, exculpating the Pāṇḍavas from responsibility for everyone's misery by blaming Duryodhana (20–30). Quoting the Vedas, Yudhiṣṭhira praises renunciation and the knowledge of brahman. *He says he is renouncing the kingdom and going to the forest. He tells Arjuna to rule the kingdom (30–40).*
8 (8; 201). Arjuna vigorously assails Yudhiṣṭhira's renouncing the hard-won kingdom. He dwells upon the irony of a king embracing mendicancy (1–5). Arjuna condemns poverty (10–15) and then argues that riches are necessary and good, even if one steals them. It is the way of the Gods and

the Vedas (15–30). He urges Yudhiṣṭhira to perform the Vedic Horse Sacrifice as required (30–35).
9 (9; 243). Yudhiṣṭhira reaffirms his intention to leave settled society and the kingship behind. He describes the peaceful, ascetic, detached way of life he envisions for himself in the forest (1–15). He describes the restrictions he will observe as he begs for food (20) and the great depth of his detachment (20–25). Describing life in terms of the continuing effects of one's past deeds and rebirth, he praises the effort to escape them (30–35).
10 (10; 277). Bhīma criticizes Yudhiṣṭhira for his feeble-minded misunderstanding. Bhīma argues that the violence of the Law of kṣatriyas is a necessary part of the world, and he derides Yudhiṣṭhira for not finishing what he has started (1–15). He then belittles the idea of renunciation for an able person, saying it is not truly Law at all (15–20). He ends by arguing that neither inactivity nor living by and for oneself alone can lead to perfection (20–25).
11 (11; 305). Arjuna relates a lecture which Indra, in the form of a bird, gave to some brahmin boys who renounced their homes and families. The bird praises the eating of "remnants" to these boys, and they misunderstand him to be praising their living upon carrion (1–10). He corrects their superficiality. He praises ritual formulas and the rites they enable (10–15). He condemns the renunciation of rites and praises sacrificial giving, and the Law of householders at its center, as real asceticism (15–20). True remnant-eaters feed others and gain Indra's heaven (20–25). The boys heeded the words of the bird and became householders, and Yudhiṣṭhira should likewise stay and rule the earth (25).
12 (12; 333). Nakula tries to appeal to Yudhiṣṭhira. The Vedas and the path of ritual actions should not be rejected. Householding and ritual actions are a very difficult way of life, and they are renunciation in its truest form (1–20). Giving to others in sacrifices is an obligation, and it is seriously wrong to fail to do it (20–25). The need for such giving is even greater in the case of kings (25–30).
13 (13; 371). Sahadeva argues similarly that true renunciation occurs within a person. Possessiveness is what must be renounced, and the path of actions centers upon this absolute renunciation (1–5). A king who does not make use of his territory is sterile, while one who has gone to the forest but still has the notion of "mine" lives in the jaws of death (5–10). He ends with an avowal of his devotion to Yudhiṣṭhira (10).

14 (14; 384). Draupadī expresses incredulity at Yudhiṣṭhira's indifference to his brothers' fate, especially after his earlier promises of future happiness (1–10). She berates Yudhiṣṭhira for not following the Law of kṣatriyas—though he has done so previously with distinction—and she exhorts him to cheer up (10–25). She berates him further for letting her and his brothers down and exhorts him to take up the kingship (25–35).
15 (15; 424). Arjuna speaks again and argues the necessity of the king's wielding the rod of rule to preserve order and law among his charges (1–10). He argues that killing is intrinsically necessary in this world, and no one lives without killing, not even the Gods, nor the forest ascetics (10–25). He says more about the value and necessity of the rod of punishment (25–45). He urges Yudhiṣṭhira not to grieve, for all duties are mixtures of good and bad in this confused world (45–55). And he affirms that the inner Self cannot be slain (55).
16 (16; 482). Bhīmasena tries to coax Yudhiṣṭhira out of his grief (1–15). He reminds Yudhiṣṭhira of the malice that provoked the war in the first place (15). He tells Yudhiṣṭhira he must now fight a battle between his true Self and his psyche (20). He closes, urging his brother to adopt the long view of things, take up the kingship, and offer the Horse Sacrifice (20–25).
17 (17; 511). The inner battle that Bhīma predicted now takes place within Yudhiṣṭhira. He criticizes unbridled acquisitiveness and entertains a series of ideas of taking up kingly responsibilities, only to reject them from the renunciatory perspective (1–10). Yudhiṣṭhira praises indifference, renunciation, and the goal of Absolute Freedom (10–15). He quotes King Janaka's famous verse and then delivers a praise of enlightened understanding (15–20).
18 (18; 535). Arjuna brings up the scathing criticism King Janaka's queen directed at Janaka for renouncing his kingdom to pursue Absolute Freedom (1–5). The queen's basic argument was that Janaka was and still should be the main support of many other people. She berated him for wrongful desertion of those who depended upon him in many ways (5–15). She focused upon the handful of grain he held and chided him for seemingly being attached to it (15–20). She then criticized mendicants in general and praised those others who produce food and give it to mendicants (20–25). She argued that true Freedom is inward detachment while still

living in the fashion of those who are attached, and she criticized renouncers as hypocrites (25–30). She closed by exhorting Janaka to win heavenly worlds by being the material support of renouncers (30). Arjuna exhorts Yudhiṣṭhira not to follow Janaka's erroneous example (35).
19 (19; 575). Yudhiṣṭhira says he is a scholar and criticizes Arjuna's ability to make learned arguments. He forgives Arjuna's lack of respect for him as due to brotherly affection (1–5). Yudhiṣṭhira argues the superiority of asceticism and renunciation over rituals and wealth (5–15). He then states that scholars have searched the Vedic texts thoroughly for something permanent, but without success. On the other hand, introspective analysis and meditative transformation make one absolutely free and happy (15–20). Arjuna cites traditional authority for doing deeds and goes on to describe brahmin thinkers who publicly refute the existence of Yudhiṣṭhira's "immortal principle." Yudhiṣṭhira responds by recommending asceticism and renunciation as the means to reach what is universal and gain happiness (20–25).

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

7.1 His mind addled with grief, Yudhiṣṭhira was miserably tormented as he recalled the great warrior Karṇa and mourned him, for Yudhiṣṭhira was scrupulously devoted to Law. Suffused with pain and grief, withered by the burning grief, his breath hissing rapidly, he looked at Arjuna and said, "Had we lived upon charity in the city of the Vṛṣṇis and the Andhakas,* we would not have come to the sorry end of having deprived our kin of their men. The designs of our enemies have flourished! The wealth of the Kurus must be gone! Since we ourselves have slain ourselves, how are we going to get the benefit that comes from doing one's Lawful Duty?

5 "Damn the *kṣatra* way! Damn the power of the mighty chest!° Damn the unforgiving stubbornness that brought us to this disaster! Good are the tolerance, self-control, sincerity, harmonious disposition, unselfishness, harmlessness, and truthful speech that are the constant traits of those who dwell in the forest. But we, because of our greed and our confusion, were proud and stubbornly arrogant. We have been brought to this condition by our desire to possess the trifling kingdom. But now that we have seen our kinsmen who pursued that prize† lying dead upon the ground, no one could make us rejoice at being king, not even with being king of all the three worlds.°

* = Dvārakā.
† = *āmiṣa*, the same word that means "meat" in stanza 10.

"To get a piece of the earth we totally abandoned men who were equal to the earth,° men whom we should never have killed. And now we live with our kinsmen dead and our wealth exhausted.

10 "We are not dogs, but like dogs we greedily went after a piece of meat! Now our piece of meat is gone, and so are those who would have eaten it. We should never have let go of those whom we killed, not for the entire earth, not for heaps of gold, not for every cow and horse there is!

"Full of desire and passion and anger and indignation, they climbed up on the wagon of Death and went to the house of Yama Vaivasvata.* Seeking great prosperity, fathers work to get sons through ascetic observances, continence, hymns praising the Gods, patient forbearance, fasting, sacrificial offerings, vows, festivals, and blessing verses. Mothers receive

15 the embryos and bear them for ten months. 'If they are born all right, and if when born they survive, and if when nourished they are vigorous, they should give us comfort in this world and the next'; so say those poor wretches, driven by their hope of gaining some benefit. When their sons are cut down and go to the house of Yama Vaivasvata while they are still young men wearing shining earrings, before they have experienced the privileges lords of the earth enjoy, before they have discharged their debts to their ancestors and the Gods, then this entire enterprise of the parents is frustrated and bears no fruit. At their birth their mother and father were filled with desires for them, but then, when they have become handsome and strong princes, they are cut down, full of desire, passion, anger, and exhilaration.† Never in any way did they realize any fruit from their births.

20 "The Pāñcālas and Kurus who were killed, and those of us who were not, shall all go to the lowest of worlds because of our deeds.

"Now, we are held to be the cause of the destruction of this people. But we were treated deceitfully by the son of Dhṛtarāṣṭra.‡ He was well-versed in deceit and lived upon illusions. And though we never gave offense, he was constantly hateful and false toward us. We wanted just a part of the kingdom! We have not won, nor have they!

"When he saw our great prosperity, and when he was briefed by Śakuni, the son of King Dhṛtarāṣṭra became pale and ashen and gaunt. Then he and his brothers had no use for this earth, nor women, nor music and song, nor what was said in assemblies of advisors, nor the learning of the learned, nor the most precious of gems, nor the earth, nor the acquisition of wealth.

26 Because of his desperate love for his son,° Dhṛtarāṣṭra acquiesced to Duryodhana's persisting in a wrong course of action that paid no heed at all to his father or Gāṅgeya§ or Vidura. Not having restrained his foul, greedy son who was dominated by his desires, Dhṛtarāṣṭra has surely gone the same way I have. And Suyodhana‖ has fallen from shining glory after

* = the Lord of the Dead. † Text note: See the endnote at 7.19b.
‡ = Duryodhana. § = Bhīṣma. ‖ = Duryodhana

causing his own brothers from the same womb to be killed, and after hurling his two old parents into the fire of grief. Evil-minded, he was always hateful toward us. What kinsman, what member of our family would speak to a friend as that base one, spoiling for a fight, spoke before the Vṛṣṇi?*

30 "We really have been ruined for years without end through our own fault!° And now, like the sun, we scorch all the space around us with our heat.

"Duryodhana, who had so much against us, fell into the clutches of a wicked advisor, and now this family of ours has been utterly destroyed because of that man. And having killed men whom we should never have killed, we have become infamous in the world. And since he made this evil-minded, wicked finisher of the family the lord of the kingdom, King Dhṛtarāṣṭra now burns with grief.

"The heroes are dead. The evil is done. Our kingdom has been laid waste. We killed them and our rage is gone. Now this grief holds me in check.

"Dhanaṃjaya,† evil one has done is struck off by goodness. Holy Learning says,° 'One who has renounced everything is not able to do evil 35 again.' Holy Learning says, 'One who has renounced everything, and who, once he is on the way stays resolute, does not suffer birth and death; he attains to perfection as *brahman.*'° He becomes a sage suffused with Knowledge, Dhanaṃjaya, and he no longer lives between the pairs of opposites.° I am going to say good-bye to all of you and go to the forest. Holy Learning says, 'One who has possessions is not able to reach the Law that is most complete,' and that is obvious to me, O destroyer of your enemies. I committed evil as I sought possessions. Holy Learning says, 'It is possible to reach the underlying cause of birth and death.' So I am discarding my possessions and the entire kingdom, and I am leaving— 40 completely free, free of grief and free of bother too. You rule this wide earth which is now at rest; the thorn has been removed from it. The kingdom and the enjoyment of it are no affair of mine, O best of the Kurus."

With this the King of Law, Yudhiṣṭhira, stopped, and the younger son of Pṛthā answered him.

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

8.1 Now Arjuna,° like a man who is not going to let an insult pass, attacked him with harsh words and delivered a very apposite speech. Aindri‡ looked fierce, and he attacked fiercely. Blazing with energy, licking the corners of his mouth over and over again, he said mockingly, "What misery! What pain! What heights of sissy feebleness!° That you would renounce this

* He refers to Duryodhana's defiant speech at 5.125; see too his testy exchange with Kṛṣṇa at 5.89.

† = Arjuna.

‡ = Arjuna, "son of Indra"; see the endnote at 8.2.

Royal Splendor after doing inhuman deeds! Having killed your enemies and acquired the earth—which thus came to you by your doing your Lawful Duty—how can you renounce everything now that your enemies 5 are slain, unless you are daft?° How can a eunuch be a king? Or one who shilly-shallies? For what purpose did you, insensate with rage, kill all those kings?

"Someone who seeks to live upon handouts rather than upon his own efforts through his own works ought to be someone whose fortune is gone, someone who has nothing at all; not someone who has sons and cattle° and is famous in every realm. King, what are people going to say about you if you renounce a thriving kingdom and live by the most wicked way of life, the 'way of the skull?'° Why do you want to go about begging like a bum, lord, ceasing to make any effort for yourself, your fortune gone, having nothing at all? Having been born in this family of kings, having won the whole earth in war, now, in delusion, you leave for the forest, 10 rejecting altogether both Law and Profit. If wicked men disrupt the ritual offerings after you have abandoned them, then the fault will be yours.

"Nahuṣa* said, 'Having nothing whatsoever° is not desirable, for cruel things must be done in poverty.° Poverty be damned!'

"Sir, you know well the 'nothing for tomorrow' ideal° of seers, but what they call 'Law'† proceeds from wealth. If someone steals a man's wealth, he shrinks that one's Lawful Deeds and Merit.° If someone were stealing our wealth, king, would we put up with it?

"People look at a poor man when he stands next to them as if he were a criminal.° Poverty is something that degrades one's position in the world; 15 why would anyone praise it? King, a man who has fallen in the world grieves, and so does he who has no wealth. I see no difference between a fallen man and a poor one.

"Like streams running down from the mountains, all undertakings proceed from wealth gathered from here and there and then made to increase.

"Law and Love and heaven come from wealth, O lord over men; the world would not manage to survive without wealth.

"All the undertakings of a stupid man who has no wealth dissolve into nothingness, like puny little rivers in the summer.

"He who has wealth has friends, he who has wealth has relatives, he who has wealth is a man in the world, he who has wealth is a learned expert.

20 "A poor man who longs for wealth cannot get it just by wanting it— wealth comes in the train of prior wealth the way mighty elephants are tied behind other elephants.

* = ancient king, father of Yayāti; thus a hoary ancestor of the Yādavas, the Bharatas, and many other royal lineages.

† = dharma.

"Law, Love, heaven, joy, anger, learning, self-control—all these come from wealth. The family arises from wealth, doing Meritorious, Lawful deeds comes from wealth. A poor man has neither this world nor the next one, O highest among men. A man with no wealth cannot properly perform those things Law requires of him. Meritorious, Lawful deeds flow out of wealth the way a mountain river flows down a rocky peak.

"And, king, that man is not truly lean if it is only his own body that is lean—truly lean is he whose horses, cattle, household, and guests are lean.

25 "Examine this according to principles. Look how it is with the Gods and the Asuras. What more is there to it, king, than that the Gods thrive from having killed their kinsmen?* If nothing belonging to another may be taken, how could one even begin to do the Meritorious deeds of Law?

"The seers have come to this conclusion in the Vedas (the three-fold body of Vedic Learning must be studied, that is a necessity for a seer): 'Wealth is to be appropriated in every which way, and it should be offered in painstaking rites of sacrificial worship.'

"The Gods obtained their positions in heaven through violence—every one of them. Thus did the Gods decide, and so say the everlasting words of the Vedas.

"They recite the Vedas,° do asceticism, perform sacrificial worship, and officiate at the sacrifices of others—all that is better when they take it from someone else.°

30 "We do not see any wealth whatsoever, not anywhere, that has not been carried off from somewhere else. For that is exactly how kings win this earth in war. And having won it, they declare it to be 'mine,' as sons do with their father's wealth. The seers who were kings won heaven by conquest, for this is declared to be their Meritorious Law.

"As waters flow out of the plentiful ocean in all the ten directions, so wealth spreads out over the earth from the family of the king.

"This earth which once belonged to Dilīpa, to Nṛga, to Nahuṣa, to Ambarīṣa, and to Māndhātar† is now yours. That sacrificial rite, one made up of material substance,° that gives the entire world to the priests as their fee,° is now incumbent upon you. If you do not offer that sacrifice, king,

35 you shall have offended the Gods. People whose king does worship with the Horse Sacrifice, complete with its gifts to the priests, become purified after the king takes his concluding bath. The great God, Viśvarūpa,‡ poured all beings as the offering at a great sacrificial rite, a Sacrifice of All Things,° and he himself poured his own self as an offering as well. This is the everlasting path of prosperity; we have never heard that there was an

* That is, the Asuras.

† = ancient kings famous for their numerous and lavish sacrificial rites; see the first and second endnotes at 8.33.

‡ = Śiva; see the first endnote at 8.36.

end of it. This is a great, ten-chariot road,° king, do not go down some country lane."

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

9.1 Pay attention for just a moment! Hold your thoughts and your ears firmly in your mind and listen.° Then what I say will please you. You will not get me back on that road the rich travel. No way! I am going to leave behind the pleasures of society and go. The road one travels all by oneself is peaceful. Ask me which one that is.

Well, even if you don't want to ask, listen to me anyway,° without asking. Abandoning the way of life and the comforts of society, enduring tremendous ascetic observances, I shall live in the forest° with the animals,

5 eating only fruits and roots, pouring offerings onto the fire at the right times, bathing both times every day, wearing hides and rags, and piling my hair up on my head; and with my food intake limited I shall be lean. Enduring cold, wind, and heat, tolerating hunger, thirst, and fatigue, I shall dry my body up with the heat of the ascetic practices that are prescribed.° Constantly I shall hear the high and low cries and calls—so pleasant to ear and mind!—of the gay birds and animals that dwell in the forests. I shall smell the delicate scents of the flowers of trees and herbs and observe the different bodily forms of the charming inhabitants of the forest. I shall do nothing to offend the gaze even of a man living by the Law of a forest sage in the company of his family, so how could I offend those who

10 live in society? Living all alone, reflecting upon matters, living on ripe and unripe foods, satisfying the ancestors and the Gods with offerings of forest fare, water, and formulas from the Vedas, and thus observing the most fiercely intense set of norms in the rule books for forest life, I will await the dissolution of this body.

Or perhaps I will bring about the destruction of my body while living all by myself,° each day under a different tree, living upon alms, a sage with shaven head. Covered with dust, taking refuge in empty houses or dwelling at the foot of a tree, having let go of everything pleasant or irritable, neither grieving nor delighting, holding praise and blame to be of equal value, having no wishes, free of possessiveness, beyond the pairs of

15 opposites, having no holdings, delighting in myself alone, completely at peace, seeming to be blind, deaf, and dumb, making no agreements with others, not with anyone at all, doing no harm to any of the four orders of animate or inanimate beings,° being the same toward all living creatures as they observe their proper Laws, ridiculing no one, frowning at nothing, my face always cheery, all my faculties thoroughly restrained, questioning no one about the road, traveling by any way whatsoever, not seeking to go in any particular direction, nor to any particular place, paying no heed to my going, not looking back, straight and steady as I go, but careful to avoid creatures moving and still—so will I be.

20 But one's basic nature comes to the fore, and one's meals become very important. I will wander over this earth° having escaped the snares of my longing: Not worrying about all those opposed pairs—"Is the food meager, is the food unsweetened?"—going on to others to obtain food-alms, if I do not get any at first; going to two houses, or five, or up to seven in a single time, if I do not get any; and going only when the cook-fire has ceased to smoke and its coals have died out, when the pestle has been set aside, when the people have eaten, when the handling of the cook-pots is over, and when mendicant monks have gone.

I will not act at all like someone who wants to live or like one who wants to die; I will take no pleasure in life or death, nor will I despise them. 25 And if there are two men, one cutting off one of my arms with a hatchet and the other sprinkling my other arm with sandal perfume, I will not think the one bad and the other good.

Having abandoned all those activities the living can do to improve things for themselves, I shall be restricted° to just the actions of blinking my eyes and so on, and I shall never be attached to any of these. Having forsaken the operations of all my senses, and then having completely forsaken all ambitions, and then having thoroughly scrubbed away all blemishes from my Mind;° having thus escaped from all attachments and passed beyond all the snares, being in the control of nothing at all—just like Mātariśvan*—moving about with passions all gone, I will attain everlasting satisfaction.

30 It was craving and ignorance that moved me to do great evil. Some men° do wholesome and unwholesome deeds to support those they call their "kin," who are a fusion of both the effects of their past deeds and the causes of future ones.° At the end of life, having left the virtually exhausted body back here, one takes its evil, for that is the result of a deed done, and it belongs to the doer of the deed.° And so it is this throng of elements,† laden with the effects of past actions, comes together with the throng of beings‡ on this wheel of rebirths that spins like the wheel of a chariot. Happy is he who abandons this worthless rebirth which is overwhelmed with birth, death, decay, disease, and pain, and which will come to no good end.° When Gods fall from heaven° and great seers fall from their stations, what man who knows the truth about the causes of these things would want to 35 continue in existence?° A king who has done diverse deeds, this and that of diverse character, is bound by even his smallest royal actions,° which truly are causes of future existence.

So I shall take the nectar of this wisdom which has been available to me

* = the wind.
† = *bhūtagrāmo 'yam*, one's body.
‡ = *bhūtagrāmeṇa*, the other beings with whom one is associated in life.

for a long time now, and I shall try to gain the place that does not decay, that is everlasting, that is firmly fixed. Observing such a way of life at all times, having gotten onto a road along which there are no dangers, I shall bring this body to a complete stop.

Bhīma said:

10.1 King, your mind cannot fathom what is really the case! It's been ruined by rote learning. You are like a some dull, unimaginative scholar of the Veda!° What good was there in annihilating the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra, O bull of the Bharatas, if your mind was set on idleness, if you despise the Meritorious Law of kings?

Forbearance, sympathy, compassion, kindliness—no member* going on the *kṣatra* way possesses these except you! Had we learned† that your mind was disposed this way,° we would not have taken up weapons, we 5 would not have killed anyone. We would have lived on handouts until we left our bodies behind, and this cruel war of kings would not have happened.

The inspired seers know that all of this is the food of life, everything stationary and mobile is the food of life.

Intelligent men who understand the *kṣatra* Law know that any who oppose someone taking back a kingdom are "liable to be killed." Those whom we killed were at fault, they opposed our ruling the kingdom. Yudhiṣṭhira, now that you have killed them, enjoy this earth Lawfully.

What we are doing here is like when a man has dug a well and, all smeared with mud, quits without having reached water.

10 What we are doing here is like when someone has climbed a tall tree and taken honey from it but meets his demise before he has eaten it.

What we are doing here is like when a man, rushing on a great journey with high hopes, despairs and turns back.

O best of the Kurus, what we are doing here is like when a man slays his enemies and afterwards kills himself.

What we are doing here is like when a hungry man gets some food and does not eat it because of some whim—or like when a lusty man gets a lusty woman and does not enjoy her.

But we should be blamed for this, for we are being dim-witted. We follow 15 you, king, because, "He is the eldest." But since we with mighty arms, with complete training, in full possession of our wits, are in the command of a eunuch, it is as if we were impotent too! When they see us like this, our effort to attain wealth obliterated, how will people not regard us as having come to nothing, as having come to grief?

"Renunciation should be made at a time of great distress, by one who is

* That is, no member of the *kṣatra*.
† Text note: See the amendment at the endnote for 10.4.

overcome by old age, or by one who has been cheated by his enemies"; so it is decreed. Thus those who are sophisticated do not recognize renunciation here,° and those of subtle insight judge it to be a transgression of Law. How is it then that you have come to hold it as your ideal? That you have taken refuge in it? You ought to continue despising that;°* otherwise you are placing your trust in others.°† Your understanding of what the Vedas say is a falsehood that has the appearance of truth. It was initiated by unbelieving Naysayers° who were impoverished because the Goddess Royal Splendor‡ utterly abandoned them.

If one resorts to this baldness, this sham-Law, and supports only himself, it is possible for him to subsist, but not to live. But then again, a person can live, and live comfortably, by himself in the forests, by not supporting any sons or grandsons, Gods, seers, guests, or ancestors. The small animals of the wild do not win heaven in this fashion, nor do the wild boars, nor do the birds; and people do not say it is a holy deed for them. King, if anyone could attain perfection from mere renunciation, then the mountains and trees would quickly attain perfection. For these have renounced permanently without having suffered any calamity—they never have any belongings, and they always live by themselves. And if one does realize perfection within one's own accumulation of past deeds° and not that of others, then one must do deeds, for there is no perfection without deeds. Aquatic creatures° would attain perfection, since each of them must support himself alone—there is no one else there for them at all.

Notice how everyone in the world is preoccupied each with his own actions. So then you must do deeds, for there is no perfection without deeds.

Arjuna said:

O bull of the Bharatas,° on this they recite this ancient account of a conversation between Śakra§ and some ascetics.

Some brahmins renounced their homes and went to the forest. Born in good families, they were dummies who set out from home even before their beards had sprouted. Thinking, "This is the Right Thing to do,"‖ they resolved upon celibacy, abandoning their families and their ancestors both.

Indra took pity on them. That blessed one became a golden bird and spoke to them. "Those who eat remnants do something that is very hard for humans to do.° What they do is really good! And their life is truly praiseworthy! Fully perfected, completely dedicated to doing Right, they are on the best course."

The seers said:°

Great! This bird praises those who eat remnants, so he must be praising us! We are remnant-eaters!

* The putative transgression of Law where one not qualified to renounce renounces.
† = a learned elite other than the brahmin experts Bhīma has just quoted.
‡ = Śrī. § = Indra. ‖ = dharma.

The bird said:

I am not praising you, you dummies smeared with mud and covered with dust who eat left-over scraps!° Real remnant-eaters are not like you at all!

The seers said:

We regard what we are doing here as the very best thing to do, as the highest. You tell us what is best, bird. We trust you completely.

The bird said:

If you are of one mind and do not mistrust me, then in all truth I shall declare to you some helpful advice.

The seers said:

We are listening to what you say, father. You know the pathways. We wish to be under your command, O you who are steeped in what is Right. Teach us.

The bird said:

Among four-footed creatures the cow is best; among metals gold is best; among sounds the ritual formulas are best; among two-footed creatures the brahmin is best. Ritual formulas are prescribed for a brahmin at particular times during his life, beginning with his birth-ceremonies and ending at the cremation ground. Vedic rites are the very highest path, the one that leads him to heaven. Now they say that all ritual actions accomplish their ends through their ritual formulas; thus, these rigidly fixed utterances of the Vedic text are regarded as "Accomplishment"° in this world. The months of the year, the bright and dark fortnights of the lunar month, and the seasons:° The sun, the moon, and the stars. All beings work for this regular order of these things,* which depend upon the rituals. This is an auspicious field of accomplishment; it is a vast place of pious labor.° Now those men who have gone the despicable path of condemning rituals are fools who have no wealth, and they have sinned. Those fools live having completely forsaken the everlasting lineages of the Gods, ancestors, and brahmins; so they travel a path unknown to Holy Learning.

Let this be the asceticism you take up:° The "I must give" that was commanded by the seers. So,° ascetic, that† is regarded as "asceticism" for one who is resolved upon it.° Providing allotments to the everlasting lineages of the Gods, to one's ancestors, and to the brahmins, and allotting service to one's teacher° are regarded as hard things to do. (The Gods arrived at their position of supreme majesty after doing what was hard to do.) Therefore, I do tell you that householding is a hard thing to take up. The observance of asceticism through this Rule of the Household is the best thing for creatures to do; it is their foundation, no doubt about it, since

* = the celestial lights just enumerated, which occasion the listed demarcations of time.
† That is, "giving," relinquishing things through sacrifices and donations.

everything is firmly established upon it. Seers who have passed beyond the pairs of opposites and are disinterested° know that this is asceticism. So people say the forest is a middling form of asceticism.

Those who consume only remnants, sharing out food in their families morning and evening according to prescription, go to an unassailable place. They say the "remnant-consumers" are those who eat what is left over after they have given portions to guests, to the Gods, to the ancestors, 25 and to their own family. And so these sincere° and resolute men are true to their word, and adhering to their proper Law they live as teachers of the whole world. These men who unselfishly do what is very hard to do gain the heaven of Śakra and dwell there for everlasting years.°

After they heard his sermon on Law and Profit, they rejected the way of the unbelieving Naysayers and took up the Law of Householding. Therefore, fierce king, rely upon your everlasting perseverance and rule the entire earth, whose enemies have been slain, O best of men.

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

12.1 After listening to Arjuna's speech, the very wise Nakula, looking directly at the king, the best of all who support Law, made a speech trying to appeal to his brother's thinking. That broad-chested, strong-armed suppressor of enemies was blushing, for usually he said little.

"Altars for all the Gods were piled at Viśākhayūpa;° understand from that, great king, that the Gods are on the path of ritual action. And the ancestors who gave life to believers and Naysayers alike also performed the rituals. Look to that Rule, king. And realize that the extreme Naysayers 5 have been driven off by the words of the Vedas. (Truly, Bhārata, if a brahmin rejects the declarations of the Vedas, he does not attain the top of the celestial vault by going the way of the Gods, not through any deeds he may do.) Brahmins who are complete masters of the Vedas, who have made careful determinations of the teachings of the Vedas, say that this* is beyond all the religious Patterns of Life. Pay attention to them, ruler of men.

"A man who, in the principal rites of sacrifice, dispenses Lawfully acquired riches to men whose minds are fully formed is regarded as a 'renouncer' by tradition. But, great king, he who is a renouncer of his own self, who disregards the taking of pleasure and is fixated upon a later Life-Pattern, is a 'renouncer motivated by Darkness.'° And a sage who wanders to and fro without a home, taking refuge at the feet of trees, who does not cook his food, ever cultivating the discipline of yoga meditation, he, son of 10 mother Pṛthā, is a 'mendicant-renouncer.' And the sage who recites the Vedas, who pays no heed to anger, exhilaration, or gossip, is a 'teacher-revering renouncer.'

"As to weighing all the religious Patterns of Life in a balance—experts say that three are on one side and the householder pattern is on the other.

* = the path, or Rule, of ritual action.

"The man who looks fully at Riches, Pleasure, and heaven,* Bhārata, and then forms the thought, 'This is the path of the great seers, this is the way of those familiar with the heavenly worlds,' is a real 'renouncer,' O bull of the Bharatas, not the man who foolishly abandons his family and goes to the forest. When one of those devious 'bird-catchers' out there snaring Merit° looks fully at pleasures, the King of Death catches him round the neck with the snare of death.

15 "Great king, action done with a concern for oneself is said not to bear any fruit, but every action done with renunciation bears great fruit. Tranquility, self-control, asceticism, making gifts, truthfulness, cleanliness, rectitude, ritual sacrifice, perseverance, and Law have always been taught as the Rule of the seers. For us here, undertaking actions for the sake of the ancestors, the Gods, and guests is praised, and right here alone the whole Group of Three† is the fruit, great king. One who is a zealous renouncer living by this Rule to which the seers have been devoted never suffers disruption in anything at all.° The stainless, utterly calm Progenitor‡ created offspring with the thought, 'They will worship me with sacrifices 20 that furnish various kinds of fees to priests—he created herbs, trees, and plants for the sacrifice; beasts suitable for sacrifice; and oblations and other things to be used in sacrifices. Those rites of sacrifice constrain the man living in the householder Pattern of Life,° so householding is a hard thing to take up in this world, and it is hard and difficult to do. And having attained it, those householders who are richly endowed with cattle and stores of grain who do not perform the rites of sacrifice have an everlasting sin, great king.

"Some brahmins perform the sacrificial rites by their daily recitations of the Veda, and others do the sacrificial rites by cultivating knowledge, while others lay out great sacrificial rites just with their minds. King, the denizens of the sky§ envy the brahmin man who has become *brahman*° 25 following a path which is centered like this on giving. By not giving away in sacrifices the various pretty gems you have gathered from here and there, you are advocating the doctrine of the Naysayers. Lord of men, I do not see renunciation for one who maintains a family except in Royal Consecration Sacrifices or Horse Sacrifices or Sacrifices of All Things. My dear elder brother, sacrifice with these and other rites esteemed by brahmins, the way Śakra, the lord of the Gods, did.

"When a king commits the fault of neglect, the thieves do their stealing. The king who fails to serve as a refuge for his subjects is considered to be the demon Kali.‖ If our minds are dominated by selfishness and we fail to give to brahmins horses, cattle, well-adorned slave girls, elephant cows,

* "Heaven," by metonymy, for dharma, "Law."
† = Merit, Riches, and Pleasure.
‡ = Prajāpati. § = the Gods.
‖ = the personification of discord; see 11.8.27.

villages, countries, fields, and houses, then we will become Kali-kings, O
30 lord of peoples—stingy, failing to serve as a refuge for people, but having the king's portion of the people's sins, experiencing only miseries, never pleasures. If you leave now without having offered the great sacrifices, without having made the offerings to the fathers, without having made gifts to worthy recipients, you will disappear like a cloud driven on the wind and blown apart. Deprived of both worlds,* you will hover in between them.

"That man who renounces—both inside and outside—whatever causes the distraction of his mind, would be a real renouncer, not the one who just lets go of things and leaves. Great king, a brahmin man° who lives by this Rule to which the seers are devoted never suffers disruption in anything at all.

35 †"Pārtha, what man would grieve after swiftly cutting down numerous enemies in battle, the way Śakra did the armies of the Daityas, if, O king, he were completely absorbed in doing his own Lawful Duty, which has been taught in tradition from the ancients, and which is fondly loved by the learned scholars?

"Lord of men, you have conquered the earth by the bold aggression of the *kṣatra* Law; and once you have made gifts to those who know the formulas of the rites, you shall go to the very top of the celestial vault. You should not be grieving now, sir."

Sahadeva said:

13.1 Bhārata,° perfection does not come from renouncing what is outside oneself. It may or may not come from renouncing some part of oneself.° Whatever Merit and whatever happiness there may be for the man who still has greedy cravings for things within himself even after he has renounced what is outside himself—let our enemies have that! But whatever Merit and whatever happiness there may be for the man who rules the earth after he has renounced something of himself—let our friends have that!

Now Death would consist of two syllables, the Everlasting *brahman* of
5 three.° "I have,"‡ would be Death; "I do not have,"§ the Everlasting. King, both *brahman* and Death dwell right within oneself unseen; they most

* = this world and the heavenly world, which are separated geographically by the atmosphere, where clouds are found.

† Two almost perfect upajāti triṣṭubhs used seemingly as an ornamental tag to Nakula's speech. See Table A6.1 in Appendix 6 for the triṣṭubh classification scheme.

‡ Sanskrit *mama* ("I have," or "It's mine") has two syllables; the verb "to be," "is," *asti*, is implicit.

§ Sanskrit *na mama* ("I do not have," "It's not mine," or "Nothing is mine") has three syllables.

certainly cause beings to struggle.° If it is certain, Bhārata, that one's soul is never destroyed, then no harm will befall beings when their bodies have been shattered.° But if there is simultaneous origination of them,°* then there would be dissolution of the soul too. If the soul were destroyed when the body is destroyed, then the path of performing actions would be pointless. Therefore, he who understands this should renounce absolutely° and follow the path taken by ancient and even more ancient pious men.

If a king acquires the whole earth with all that is stationary and mobile
10 upon it, but does not use it rightly, then his life is fruitless. On the other hand, king, he who dwells in the forest and lives upon forest fare but thinks of objects as "Mine" is living in the mouth of death. Look to the essential reality of things that are within and things that are without,° Bhārata. Now those who see that reality are freed from the great danger.

You, sir, are my father, you are my mother, you are my brother, you are my teacher. So please put up with the miserable babbling of my torment. O best of the Bharatas, whether what I have said is really true or not, know that it comes from my love for you, O protector of the earth.

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

14.1 When the King of Law, Yudhiṣṭhira son of Kuntī, had nothing to say to his brothers' pronouncing these various conclusions from the Vedas, the best of women, the splendidly beautiful, long-eyed Draupadī spoke up. A woman with the full standing of the great and noble family of her descent, Draupadī addressed that leader of kings, as that bull among kings sat encircled by his brothers. (They seemed like lions and tigers, while he was like the lord of a herd in the middle of his elephants.) Though the king always cherished her affectionately, this woman who knew Law and
5 saw Law† was usually haughty towards Yudhiṣṭhira in particular. After greeting her husband in a soothing and supremely charming way, the wide-hipped woman looked directly at him and made this speech.

"Your brothers here are parched like *cātaka* birds,‡ O son of Pṛthā. They stand here cuckooing monotonously,° but you ignore them. Say the right word, great king, and make them as happy as big bull elephants in rut. Their lot has been relentlessly miserable.

"How was it, king, that earlier, in the Dvaita forest, where they suffered the cold and the wind and the heat, you told all your brothers together such things as, 'Pursuing victory in war we shall enjoy the earth so full
10 of every desire after we kill Duryodhana in battle.' And, 'This misery of living in the forest will turn into comfort for us when we offer sacrifices with various opulent rites affording abundant presents to the priests; after we stifle our enemies, cutting down their great elephants, depriving

* That is, of the body and the soul.

† The same description was given of Gāndhārī at 11.15.6d when she burned Yudhiṣṭhira's nails.

‡ = a species of cuckoo, *Cuculus melanoleucus*, thought to subsist on raindrops.

their warriors of their chariots, and strewing the earth with chariots and charioteers.' You said these things to them, yourself, O best of the supporters of Law. How can you, heroic man, squash their spirits again now?

"A eunuch cannot enjoy the earth. A eunuch cannot gain riches. There are no sons in a eunuch's house, as there are no fish in mud. A kṣatriya without the rod of rule does not shine, one without the rod of rule does not gain prosperity; the subjects of a king without the rod of punishment do not thrive happily, Bhārata.

15 "Most excellent of kings, friendliness toward all creatures, generous giving, study, asceticism—all this may be Law for a brahmin, but is not for a king. Restraining the wicked and protecting the pious, and not fleeing in war—this is the highest Law of kings.

"The man who has both patience and anger, both fear and fearlessness, who both gives and takes, who both withholds and confers benefits, that man is regarded as one who knows Law.

"You did not acquire this earth through Holy Learning, nor as a gift, nor through conciliation, nor by sacrificing, and certainly not by cowering down.* You cut down that army of your enemies that bristled with eager heroes,° that had its full measure of elephants, horses, and chariots, that

20 was greater by three components,° and that was protected by Droṇa and Karṇa, and by Aśvatthāman and Kṛpa—so now you should enjoy this earth, hero.

"Great king, tiger among men, you crushed with your rod the continent of Jambū,° where various countries mingle. Overlord of men, you crushed with your rod the continent of Krauñca, which is like the Jambū continent, but west of the mountain Great Meru. Overlord of men, you crushed with your rod the continent of Śāka, which is like the Krauñca continent, but east of Great Meru. North of Great Meru, but the same as the continent of Śāka, is Bhadrāśva which you, tiger among men, crushed with your

25 rod. These continents and the adjacent continents, where many different countries are located, were crushed by your rod, hero, when you plunged into the ocean. You have accomplished these unmatchable deeds, Bhārata, but you are not pleased, even as brahmins pay you honor.

"Look at your brothers, Bhārata, and make them as happy as mighty bull elephants in rut. Like to Gods, they all withstood their enemies in battle and burned them. Just one of these men would be enough for my happiness—I believe that. But how much better it is that I have all you tigers of men, you bulls of men, for my husbands—in the way the body's faculties° are put together for its movement.

30 "My mother-in-law† who knows all and sees all lied to me. 'Yudhiṣṭhira

* Text note: See the endnote at 14.18. † = Kuntī.

will bring you to the highest happiness, O princess of Pāñcāla, after he who is so quickly aggressive kills many thousands of kings.' I see that that was wrong because your mind is muddled, O lord of people. When the eldest in a group is insane all the others follow after him; so all the Pāṇḍavas are insane, O Indra among kings, because you are insane. If they were not insane, O lord of people, your brothers would imprison you along with the unbelieving Naysayers and govern the earth. Anyone who does anything as foolish as this does not come to much good. Anyone who behaves so eccentrically should be cured with medicines: By breathing fumes, by the use of ointments, by applications in the nose.

35 "O best of the Bharatas, I am the lowest of all women in the world! After being abused like that by our enemies, I want to live now!

"They have striven hard, and success has come to them, but now that you've got the entire earth, you are turning success into disaster all by yourself!

"As those two most excellent kings Māndhātar and Ambarīṣa* were esteemed among all the kings on the earth, so are you eminent, king. Rule the Goddess Earth with her continents, forests, and mountains, and protect creatures Lawfully. Do not lose heart, king. Pouring offerings into the fires, sacrifice with different sacrificial rites. Present the brahmins with towns, feasts, and clothes, O best of kings."

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

15.1 After hearing Yājñasenī's† speech, Arjuna begged leave of his eldest brother, the strong-armed lord, and spoke again.

"The king's rod of punishment governs all creatures, the rod of punishment protects them, the rod of punishment stands watch while everyone sleeps—the wise know that the rod is Law.

"The rod of punishment guards Law and likewise Profit, overlord of men, and it guards Pleasure—the rod of punishment is said to be the whole group of the three pursuits.

"Grain‡ is protected by the rod of punishment; wealth§ is protected by the rod of punishment. You know this; accept it. Look at how things work naturally in the world.

5 "Some evil men do no evil out of fear of the king's rod, some out of fear of Yama's rod, and some out of fear of the next world. Some evil men do no evil out of fear of each other. In the world which has come to be constituted just as it is, everything is based on the rod of punishment. From fear of punishment some creatures do not eat each other; they would be sunk in blind darkness if the rod of punishment did not guard them.

"Since one disciplines the undisciplined and punishes the rude, the

* See above, 12.8.33. † = Draupadī. ‡ = *dhānya*.
§ = *dhana*; a point is being made of the similarity of the words for "grain" and "wealth."

wise know it as the "rod,"* because of the disciplining† and the punishing‡ with it.

"The brahmins' rod is in their speech;° kṣatriyas wield it with their arms; tradition says vaiśyas use donations as their rod, and śūdras are said to have no rod.

"Law,§ which has 'punishment' as a name, was established in the world so mortals would have no confusion, and so riches would be protected. In the place where black, red-eyed, kindly° punishment is afoot, creatures are not in confusion, if he who applies it looks aright. Celibate students, householders, forest-hermits, and wandering alms-seekers‖ stay on their way just from fear of punishment. King, a man who is not afraid does not perform rites of sacrificial worship; a man unafraid does not wish to make gifts, no man who is not afraid wants to abide by agreements.

"One does not attain great Royal Splendor without having cleft the vital organs of enemies, without having done brutal deeds, without having killed as a fisherman does. There is no fame in this world for one who does not kill, nor wealth, nor offspring. Indra came to be Great Indra only by slaying Vṛtra. The very Gods are killers, and the world worships them extensively: Rudra is a killer, and so too Skanda, Śakra, Agni, Varuṇa, and Yama. Time is a killer, and so too Vāyu,# Death, Vaiśravaṇa, Ravi,** the Vasus, the Maruts, the Sādhyas, and the Viśvedevas, Bhārata. People worship these Gods with fervent devotion, but not Brahmā, nor the Creator, nor Pūṣan. Some men who are completely cool toward all activities worship these three Gods who are equally disposed toward all beings, who are self-controlled, and who are dedicated to inner peace.

"I see no one whatsoever who lives in the world without doing harm. Beings live upon beings, the stronger upon the weaker. The mongoose eats mice, then the cat eats the mongoose, the dog eats the cat, a wild beast eats the dog, and a man eats all of these—see how it is Law goes: Everything here mobile and stationary is the food of life. It is a rule decreed by God; a wise man is not confused at it. You ought to live like the being you were produced to be,° O Indra among kings.

"Not even ascetics—those dummies who have taken to the forest, having removed anger and joy—can keep life going without killing. There are many living creatures in water, in earth, and in fruits, and no one does not kill them. What can one do but make life go?†† Some beings have such subtle forms that they are known only through inferences, and their bodies

* = *daṃda.*
† = *damana;* more etymological explanation.
‡ = *daṇḍana.* § = *maryādā.*
‖ = people in the four religious Patterns of Life, the four *āśramas.*
\# = the God Wind. ** = Sūrya, the God Sun.
†† = *prāṇayāpana,* "causing life to go"; quite possibly a pun referring to the unavoidable reciprocity between "maintaining one's own life" and "expelling the life from" other creatures.

can be destroyed° by merely batting the eyelashes. Completely deluded sages who have gotten rid of anger and selfishness, and who have left their villages, can be seen living in the forest in the same manner as family men.*

"Having plowed the earth and destroyed plants, trees, and so forth, and birds and animals, men lay out sacrificial rites of worship and reach heaven.

"When the rod of force is well applied, all the undertakings of all beings succeed, son of Kuntī, I have no doubt of it. If there were no rod of force in the world, these creatures would perish, the stronger would roast the weaker on a spit like fish.

> †"Some time in the past this truth was spoken by Brahmā: 'The rod of punishment protects creatures, when applied well. Look how fires go out when they are not afraid; but when scolded, they blaze up from fear of punishment.'

"If punishment did not exist in the world, separating the right and the wrong, all that is here would be like blind darkness; nothing at all would be perceived. Even the Naysayers who criticize the Vedas—they who have completely shattered the boundaries—become amenable to the king's use° when harried with the rod of punishment. Everyone must be dominated by punishment, for a pure man is impossible to find. Terrified by fear of the rod, a man becomes amenable to the king's use.

"The rod of rule was ordained by the Arranger so the four Orders would not be confused about what to do, so prudent men would have guidance, and to preserve Law and Profit. If they did not fear the rod of punishment, birds and wild beasts would eat cattle and men and the foods intended for offering in sacrificial worship. If the rod did not rule, the celibate student would not study the Veda, the lovely cow would not give milk, and a girl would not marry. If the rod did not rule, everything would be neglected, all barriers would be shattered, men would not recognize individual possession.° If the rod did not rule, men, fearing nothing, would not attend years-long sacrificial sessions done according to prescriptions and endowed with presents for the priests. If the rod did not rule, men, not adhering to the prescriptions declared in the Vedas, would not perform the Law of their proper religious Pattern of Life. And no one would acquire learning. If the rod did not rule, camels, oxen, horses, mules, and asses would not draw vehicles when yoked together for work. If the rod did not rule, servants would not do what they were told, nor would a child ever adhere to what his father thought was Law.

"All creatures stand within the sway of the rod of punishment. Wise men know that fear is the rod. Heaven, and this human world as well,

* That is, doing just as much harm to such small creatures as householders in the village.
† A Vedic-style triṣṭubh stanza.

stand firm upon the base of the rod of punishment. Where the enemy-annihilating rod is active and well administered, deceit, evil, and fraud are not seen. Were the rod not raised up, eager dogs would drink the libations prepared for sacrifices. If the rod did not rule, crows would snatch the *puroḍāśa* cakes away from sacrifices. 45

"Do not worry whether this kingdom has come to be yours Lawfully or Unlawfully. Make use of all that it yields and worship with sacrificial rites. Men possessed of Royal Splendor° perform Law comfortably, wearing clothes that are like new, living together with their cherished wives, eating the very best food.

"All endeavors depend on riches, no doubt, and riches depend upon the rod of punishment. See the importance of the rod.

"Law was promulgated in this world just so the world could function. The most excellent summary statement of Law is 'Doing no injury* and the rightful inflicting of injury.' No one is absolutely virtuous, and no one is absolutely devoid of virtue. Both right and wrong are seen in everything that must be done. Men castrate animals, and they punch holes in their noses, and they tie them and tame them; and many animals pull heavy loads. 50

"So, given all these points, great king, perform the primordial Law in this world that is jumbled, decrepit, and off-track. Son of Kuntī, offer rites of sacrificial worship, make gifts, protect creatures, watch over Law, kill your enemies, and guard your friends. You must feel no distress as you cut your enemies down, Bhārata. There is no sin whatsoever in your doing that, Bhārata. A man who attacks and kills another man who has attacked him with the intention of killing him would not become a brahmicide° for doing that;† one's own rage simply meets the other's rage. 55

"The inner Self of all creatures cannot be slain, there is no doubt of that. When the Self is unslayable, how can anyone be slain by anyone? For, just as a man might move into a new house, so does the soul arrive at various new bodies. Discarding the old bodies, it takes on new ones. Thus do those men who see the basic realities describe the face of death."

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

16.1 After listening to Arjuna's speech the fiery Bhīmasena was extremely impatient. But keeping himself in check, he said to his eldest brother, "You know Law, king. There is nothing on this earth you do not know. We are always trying to understand what you do, but we never can. I keep saying to myself, 'I will not speak, I will not speak.' But I will speak, because it is too painful! Pay attention to this, king.

"Everything has been cast into doubt now by your confusion, sir. And

* = *ahiṃsā*.

† That is, even in the extreme case that it were a brahmin who attacked him, he would be exonerated; see the endnote at 15.55.

5 now we are all upset, and weak. How can the king of the world, who is conversant with all the learned treatises, become muddled with depression as if he were some dull clod? The coming and going of the whole world are known to you! There is nothing in the present or the future you do not know, lord! Great king, since it has come to this, I will make an argument to get you to rule.° Listen to this now with undivided attention.

"Two kinds of disease develop, the bodily and the mental. The occurrence of either of them is dependent upon the other; one is never found without the other. Mental disease arises from bodily, there is no doubt, and likewise it is a certainty that bodily disease arises from mental. 10 A man who grieves over some misery of body or mind that has passed obtains misery through his misery—he suffers two evils. Cold, warmth, and wind are the three attributes of bodies. They say the definition of health is the equal balance of these elements. When the level of any one of these rises too high, a medical prescription is indicated. Cold is checked by warmth, and warmth by cold.

"Lightness, Energy, and Darkness would be the three mental attributes. Sorrow is checked by joy, joy by sorrow. Someone experiencing happiness needs to remember misery. Someone experiencing misery needs to 15 remember happiness. You ought not recall° misery when you are miserable, nor happiness when you are happy. You ought not recall, when you are miserable, how your misery was produced from happiness, nor, when you are happy, should you recall how your happiness was produced from misery. But fate is more powerful. Or perhaps it is your own basic nature that drags you about, king. You saw Kṛṣṇā* forced to enter the men's assembly hall when she had her period and was wearing only a single piece of clothing while we sons of Pāṇḍu just watched with wide eyes—you should not recall that.° Our departure from the city, our being clad in antelope skins, our long time of dwelling in the forest—you should not recall that. How have you forgotten Jaṭāsura's° tormenting us, our fight with Citrasena, and the Sindhu king Jayadratha's tormenting us? And 20 Kīcaka's kicking Draupadī with his foot during our year in hiding? And that you fought a war with Droṇa and Bhīṣma, O tamer of your enemies?

"Now a terrible battle with your mind alone awaits you. A battle in which there is no need for arrows, nor allies, nor kinsmen; a battle you must fight by yourself—that is the battle that awaits you. And if you lose your life before the battle is won, you will arrive at another body and you will fight with it† again. So you must enter that battle now, Bharata bull. And after you have won it, great king, you will have done what you had to do. Having settled upon this understanding—that there is this coming and going of creatures—rule the kingdom in the fashion of your father and grandfathers, as is proper.

* = Draupadī. † = his mind.

25 "Fortunately the wicked Duryodhana and his following have been killed in the war. Fortunately you have followed the lead of Draupadī's tresses.° Worship as prescribed with a Horse Sacrifice that offers good presents to the priests.

"We are your servants, son of Pṛthā, and so is the heroic Vāsudeva."

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

17.1 You* crave the kingdom because you are thoroughly dominated by the evils of insatiability, heedlessness, wantonness, passion, agitation, power, delusion, pride, and anxiety. Be completely free and calm within, and be perfectly happy even without that delightful prize. The king who would rule this entire earth all by himself has only one stomach. So why do you praise this?† Desire cannot be filled in a day, nor in a month, O bull among men. Someone trying to fill up unfillable desire could not do it even in a lifetime.

5 A fire blazes up when it is fed, and it dies out when not fed, so you should put out the fire that has shot up in your belly by taking only a little food.

"Conquer your belly by means of the earth which you have won—the highest good is won by using earth that has been conquered."

You praise merely human desires and enjoyments and merely human lordship. Those who do not indulge in enjoyments and who are not mighty go to the unsurpassable place.

"The country's prosperity,° and its doing Good Works or Bad—these are based in you."

Free yourself from that great burden; resort to renunciation alone.

"The tiger, for the sake of his one belly, creates a lot of carrion, and other animals who move more slowly live upon that."

An ascetic renounces by contracting the realms of his attention, but kings are never satisfied:° Look at the difference between their Minds.°

10 "Those ascetics who eat leaves, those who grind their grain with stones, those who use only their teeth for mortars, those who consume nothing but water, and those who consume nothing but wind—they win only this hell."°

Between a king who may govern every part of this entire land and a man who regards stones and gold to be of equal value, the latter has achieved the objective, and the king has not. Do not undertake projects to realize your intentions, have no wishes, and have no sense of "mine." Take yourself to that state that is free of sorrow in this world and unchanging in the next one. Those who have nothing they specially prize do not grieve. Why do you fret over the prize? Once you have completely renounced the prize you covet, you will be done with pointless talk.

There are two famous paths, the way of the fathers and the way of the

* Yudhiṣṭhira argues with himself; see the endnote at 17.0.
† = one man's having so much more than one man needs.

Gods. Those who sacrifice go by the way of the fathers; those who have

15 Absolute Freedom go by the way of the Gods. Purified by asceticism, the observance of celibacy, and recitation of the Vedas, they* shine radiantly after they have shed their bodies. They have gone where death holds no sway. An object of enjoyment is a fetter to the world;° similarly objects of enjoyment have been declared to be karma°—freed of these two nooses, one attains to the highest place.

Now they say this verse was sung by King Janaka, who was beyond the pairs of opposites, who had gained Absolute Freedom, and who had Absolute Freedom in full view. "Yea! My possessions are endless though nothing at all is mine. Were Mithilā† ablaze in flames, nothing of mine would be burning." One who has ascended the tower of wisdom looks down to the dull-witted men who grieve over things for which they should not grieve; he is like a man standing on a mountain peak, looking down at

20 those on the ground below. The man who sees what is to be seen when he looks, that man has eyes, that man has understanding. Understanding is said to come from complete awareness, and that comes from having discriminative knowledge of things not usually known.°

But someone who merely has exact knowledge of the words of the learned men whose minds are perfected—who have been stimulated to become *brahman*°—that man would merely become proud. When someone sees the separateness of beings as actually standing in the One, and sees too that their diffusion° is from that one alone, then he attains to perfection as *brahman.* These men go over that course, not those men of little intelligence who are ignorant, nor those without understanding, nor those without asceticism. Everything is based in understanding.

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

18.1 When the king lapsed into silence, Arjuna spoke to him again. He was deeply pained by the king's verbal darts, and he burned with grief and sorrow.

"Bhārata, people tell this story of a conversation that took place long ago between the King of Videha‡ and his wife. The distressed queen spoke to the king of Videha, that lord of peoples, after he had discarded his kingdom and committed himself to a life of begging. Janaka had taken to the life of ascetic baldness after abandoning his riches, his offspring, his

5 friends, his many different gems, and the purifying path.§ His dear wife saw him when he lived upon begging, possessing nothing whatsoever, a bit of grain in his hand; he was sitting without stirring, disinterested. Angry, that wife met with her husband, who feared nothing from anything, in

* = those who have gained Absolute Freedom *(mokṣa).*
† = King Janaka's royal city. ‡ = King Janaka.
§ = the path of ritual actions.

a deserted place, and the intelligent woman made this argumentative speech.

" 'How could you throw off your kingdom heaped with riches and grain and take up this "life of the skull," wandering the forest with a handful of grain? What you say you are doing is one thing, king—that having thrown off your great kingdom you content yourself with very little—but your actions are something else. Now with this way of life you cannot support guests, nor the Gods, nor brahmins, nor your ancestors, so your exertions
10 are useless. And king, now that you have been forsaken by all of these—the Gods, guests, and your ancestors—you travel around doing nothing. You who were the support of thousands of brahmins steeped in the threefold wisdom of the Vedas, who were the support of the world, now seek your support from others.

" 'Having given up brilliant Royal Splendor, you look like a dog! Your mother has no son now, and I, the princess of Kosala, have no husband, all because of you! Eighty kṣatriya women desiring Merit attended you, waiting for your commands—pitiable women motivated by their desire for fruits from their actions. Having deprived them of their fruits, what heavenly worlds will you go to now, king, given that Absolute Freedom is
15 quite uncertain for souls that others depend upon.° Your deeds are wicked, and you do not have either the higher world or the lower one since you want to live after abandoning your Lawful wife.

" 'For what purpose do you travel around doing nothing, having completely given up flower-garlands, scents, ornaments, and all your different clothes? Having been a refreshing pool for all beings, a vast opportunity for them to cleanse themselves, a towering tree, you now sit in attendance upon others. When an elephant gives it up,* many scavengers feed upon it, and many worms too—but what of you, who are of no use at all?

" 'How would you feel toward someone who broke your water pot,
20 stole your triple staff, and stole your robe? And this handful of grain, this kind support† you have received after your discarding of everything—if everything is equal with this, then what are you giving to me?‡ And if this handful of grain is your "wealth"° in this world, then what you say you are doing is completely empty. Who am I to you? Who are you to me? What support do you have for me now?§ Rule the earth, king, when your support for me would be a palace, a bed, a vehicle, and robes and jewels. What is all that to you, since you completely renounce even that "wealth" which is assembled by those who seek happiness without any aspirations

* = dies: *nyāse (vṛtte).* † Text note: See the endnote at 18.20b.
‡ That is, "as the support you owe to me as your wife"? See the endnote at 18.20d.
§ "I am your wife, you are my husband. You are obliged to support me." As before in her diatribe, she does not acknowledge his renunciation as a legitimate ethical choice.

for splendor, who have no riches, who have abandoned their friends, and have nothing at all.*

" 'Understand the difference between someone who does nothing but take and someone who always gives. Who is held to be the better of these two? Presents given to men who beg all the time—even if they are strictly righteous and not the least bit fraudulent—are bad offerings; they are like
25 a sacrificial offering made into a forest fire.° Just as fire does not die down without having burned a thing completely, so a brahmin who begs all the time never becomes completely quiet within.°

" 'The Vedas and food are the never-varying fundamental substance of the strictly righteous people in this world. If the giver shall not give, how could there be any who seek Absolute Freedom? In this world householders come from food, and mendicants come from them. Life arises from food, so the giver of food would be the giver of life. Those who have withdrawn from householders have come right back to householders. And those self-controlled ones sit bad-mouthing their source and their foundation.

" 'One cannot say that a man is a monk just from his having renounced, nor from his having a shaved head, nor from his begging. Rather, when an upright man relinquishes wealth,† understand that that happy man
30 is a monk. O lord of the earth, that man is Absolutely Free, who, though he is unattached, goes about like someone who is attached;‡ he has no attachments, he has untied all bonds, he is the same toward enemies and friends. The bald ones in their ochre robes are bound by many kinds of fetters—they travel about in order to receive gifts, piling up idle enjoyments. Lacking understanding,§ they abandon the three Vedas and their livelihoods, and then they abandon their children and take up the triple staff and the robe. Realize that the ochre robe on one who is not free from passion serves that person's interests; it serves as a livelihood for those bald ones who merely display the flag of Law, in my opinion.

" 'Great king, having conquered your senses, conquer heavenly worlds by supporting holy men, whether they wear their hair piled on their heads or are bald, whether they are clad in ochre robes, antelope skins, or rags, or are naked.'

35 "Previously Janaka performed the rites of installing the ritual fires, provided for the needs of his elders, performed sacrifices with animals as the fees given to the priests, and made gifts day after day—who could be more observant of Law than that? King Janaka was sung of in this world

* These characterizations refer to renouncers; the "wealth" assembled is the accoutrement of renouncers.
† The queen refers here to the various ways a householder gives up, sacrifices, his wealth; principally, in the rites.
‡ That is, as a householder.
§ That is, without the "true" or "correct" understanding (buddhi).

as one who knew the fundamental principles of things, and even he became completely confused. Do not succumb to the power of confusion.

"Always protecting our subjects and this Law—which has been followed by men dedicated to giving and endowed with the virtue of benevolence—we who shun lust and anger, we who have resorted to making gifts as our ideal, we supporters of brahmins, we speakers of the truth shall reach very desirable heavenly worlds."

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

19.1 My dear younger brother,° I know the higher and the lower instructions, and both those statements of the Veda, "Do deeds," and, "Renounce." And I know the multitudinous treatises illustrated with reasoned arguments; and exactly what counts as a definitive conclusion, I know that too, just as it is defined. But you follow the customs of fighting men and know nothing but weapons. You are not at all competent to get at the real meaning of learned teachings. And, if you do understand Law,° then you ought not to criticize me like this, since I see the subtleties of meaning in the learned treatises and am well versed in the definitive conclusions regarding Laws.

5 But you spoke relying on the sympathy of a brother, and what you have said is apt and fit. So you have pleased me, Arjuna, son of Kuntī. In all the three worlds there is none like you, not among all those whose Law is fighting, nor among those who are effective at getting things done. But what I am saying is a subtle matter of Law, and it is hard for you to comprehend it; you ought not doubt my understanding, Dhanaṃjaya. You know only the teachings on fighting; you have not attended the elders, you are not acquainted with the conclusions that those who know these things in their compact and extensive forms have arrived at.

Arjuna said:

"Austerities, renunciation, and the injunction to act," that, my dear older brother,° is the definitive conclusion of the wise; each later one of these three is better than the preceding; that one,* is the most excellent course.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

10 Son of Pṛthā, you do not see this rightly when you think it means there is nothing better than wealth.° I will explain to you how this is not the case in terms of what is best. Men devoted to Law° habitually practice asceticism and recite the Vedas: There are seers engaged in asceticism who have eternal heavenly worlds; there are sage youngsters who have not yet grown beards, and other forest-dwellers too without end—none of them have wealth, but they go to heaven by recitation of the Vedas. Noble ones who have renounced the darkness that comes from a lack of understanding, by limiting the objects their senses perceive, go by the northern path to the heavenly worlds of renouncers. But the worlds reached by going over the path to the south, which you see as radiant,° are the worlds of those who

* = the injunction to act.

15 perform the rites, and they are the same as cremation grounds.° But that course which those who have Absolute Freedom see before them cannot be described; therefore, renunciation is regarded as preeminent. But it is hard to explain.

Great scholars, unwavering in their desire to see what is durable and what is not, have gone through the learned teachings, thinking "It might be here," or "Maybe it's here." They have searched outside the statements of the Vedas and the forest treatises, and, like those who split open the trunk of a banana tree,° they do not see anything durable. But then, by an absolutely radical analysis,° on the basis of indirect clues, some others say that the soul within the body of five elements is connected with desire and aversion. Invisible to the eye and inexpressible in words, it operates in

20 beings, accompanied by the motive force of past deeds. After making the sensory field auspicious, after suppressing craving in the mind, and after getting rid of the continuum of past deeds, one is free and happy. When there is this path which must be traversed with great delicacy, and which is used by the pious, how is it, Arjuna, that you praise something that luxuriates in evil?

Arjuna said:

The men who know the ancient treatises° see it this way, Bhārata; they are constantly caught up in actions—in making gifts and in the work of sacrificial worship. They are men who are not fools who hold to the ancient learning rigidly° and say, "It* does not exist"; they are learned experts and even use reasoned arguments. Eloquent and greatly learned, these men wander over the entire earth, speaking in assemblies, heaping scorn upon

25 the immortal. If we do not recognize these pious men as wise for this, as the exalted ones most learned in the treatises, who should?

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

O son of Kuntī, one who knows Law always attains the universal principle† through asceticism; he finds the universal through the Higher Mind;‡ he gains happiness through renunciation.

12(84c) The Persuasion of Yudhiṣṭhira, Part 2: The Seers and Kṛṣṇa

12.20–38 (B. 20–37; C. 601–1392)

20 (20; 601). The seer Devasthāna interrupts the family colloquy and urges Yudhiṣṭhira to keep the kingdom and offer sacrifices (1). He tells Yudhiṣṭhira he must properly

* = the immortal. † = *mahat*, "the Great One."

‡ = *buddhyā*; that is, through enlightened understanding or insight.

understand the prescriptions concerning action and asceticism. He quotes Vaikhānasa scriptures that recommend against riches (5), and then says that all riches were created for the purpose of ritual sacrifices. The greatness of Indra and Śiva, and of Kings Marutta and Hariścandra, derives from their having offered sacrifices (10).

21 (21; 615). Devasthāna goes on, quoting a sermon given to Indra by the seer Bṛhaspati that recommends yogic virtues and goals (contentment, seeing the Self) (1–5). Devasthāna then lists a number of ethically different activities people recommend (e.g., sacrifice, renunciation, making gifts, taking gifts) and says the wise hold harmlessness to be the best Law, harmlessness in the context of being a householder with a wife (5–10). The seer then praises wealth as the most important part of Law and exhorts Yudhiṣṭhira to follow assiduously the Law of kings (10–15).

22 (22; 636). Arjuna preaches to Yudhiṣṭhira that in making war he was only following the kṣatra *Law. This Law is what is ordained for him, and he should master himself and stop grieving, offer sacrifices, and rule the kingdom (1–15).*

23 (23; 651). Vyāsa speaks up and praises householding as the best of the Life-Patterns (1–5). He sharply distinguishes the ethical ideals for brahmins from those for kṣatriyas (5–10). He goes on to praise kṣatriyas' wielding the rod of punishment, as King Sudyumna had done (10–15).

24 (23; 667). Yudhiṣṭhira asks about King Sudyumna's great deed, and Vyāsa relates the story of the brahmin brothers Śaṅkha and Likhita. Upon the command of his elder brother (the great ascetic Śaṅkha), the great ascetic Likhita insisted to King Sudyumna that the king punish him, Likhita, for an offense. The king had Likhita's hands cut off, but Śaṅkha later caused them to grow back. Śaṅkha then explained that the king had had to do his duty and inflict the punishment so that the king and his ancestors would be purified (1–25). Vyāsa exhorts Yudhiṣṭhira again to quit grieving, wield the rod of punishment, and forget renunciation (25–30).

25 (24; 698). Vyāsa encourages Yudhiṣṭhira to reward his brothers properly for their earlier privations, to offer sacrifices, and discharge his debts of Law (1–5). Vyāsa then gives Yudhiṣṭhira a list of instances showing how kings do and do not incur sin as they rule (5–20). The seer then recites verses praising King Hayagrīva, a pious king who died in battle after a life of Lawful rule (20–30).

26 (25; 732). Yudhiṣṭhira's grief persists, so Vyāsa recites

verses that point to Time as the fundamental cause of what happens (5–10). Vyāsa then quotes King Senajit on the notion that all things occur in alternating cycles, in Time, according to the inherent natures of things, or fate. Misery and happiness delimit each other and give rise to each other in alternation. Thus, a person desiring true and everlasting happiness should cease thinking in terms of personal agency, should identify with the whole world, and should understand what happens as simply "what happens" (10–25). Vyāsa reiterates these ideas (25–30) and then praises once again the Brahminic kingly ideal (30–35).

27 (27; 799). Yudhiṣṭhira blames himself for the death of many of his kinsmen in the war and the interruption of his ancestral line (1). He laments at length the fall of Bhīṣma, his lie to Droṇa, the slaying of his eldest brother Karṇa, and his sending Abhimanyu to his death (1–20). Yudhiṣṭhira vows to fast to death and dismisses everyone (20–25). Vyāsa tells him he grieves too much, and he reiterates that much of what happens is transitory and due to necessary universal processes beyond a person's control. Yudhiṣṭhira should do the deeds for which he was made (25–30).

28 (28; 833). Vyāsa continues, recounting a sermon of the brahmin Aśman to King Janaka. Janaka asked Aśman how one might be well in the face of the transitoriness of kinsmen and property. Aśman spoke of the general processes of people's experience of misery, particularly old age and death: They occur through the interaction of one's mind with what happens around and to oneself, and a person has no control over what happens. What happens is ordained in nature, or caused by agencies beyond our awareness—by fate or Time—and people's characters and deeds make no difference. Time moves inexorably, and death is inescapable (1–50). The king who lives by the Law taught in the Vedas wins glory (50–55). Janaka's grief was dispelled by this talk, and Yudhiṣṭhira's should be too (55).

29 (29; 893). Arjuna tells Kṛṣṇa to dispel Yudhiṣṭhira's grief. Kṛṣṇa reemphasizes to Yudhiṣṭhira that the heroes killed in the war are truly dead and gone, that they died nobly, were purified by the blade, and should not be mourned (1–10). Kṛṣṇa tells a story the seer Nārada recited to King Sṛñjaya, who mourned for his dead son. It was The Tale of Sixteen Great Kings *of the past—Marutta, Suhotra, Bṛhadratha, Śibi, Bharata, Rāma, Bhagīratha, Dilīpa, Māndhātar, Yayāti, Ambarīṣa, Śaśabindu, Gaya, Rantideva, Sagara, and Pṛthu—*

all of whom accomplished many munificently pious deeds but nonetheless passed on in death (10–135). After hearing this solemn catalog, Sṛñjaya requested that Nārada revive his dead son Svarṇaṣṭhīvin, and Nārada agreed to do so (135–140).
30 (30; 1043). Yudhiṣṭhira asks Kṛṣṇa for information about Sṛñjaya's son Svarṇaṣṭhīvin, "Excretor of Gold" (1). The two seers Nārada and Parvata, maternal uncle and nephew respectively, were wandering upon the earth for a time and stayed with King Sṛñjaya for a while. Nārada fell in love with the king's daughter Sukumārī but failed to tell Parvata about it, thus violating an agreement they had made (1–15). Upon discerning this, Parvata cursed Nārada to be seen by everyone as a monkey as soon as he married Sukumārī. In return, Nārada cursed Parvata never again to dwell in heaven (15–25). Both curses held true for many years: Nārada married Sukumārī, who served him as a faithful and loving wife in spite of his appearance, and Parvata wandered over the earth, unable to return to heaven (25–30). Parvata later met Nārada in a woods, and the two seers reconciled and withdrew their respective curses. Sukumārī was confused at first, when her husband seemed to her a stranger, but Parvata explained everything to her and then departed for heaven (30–40) Kṛṣṇa suggests that Yudhiṣṭhira ask Nārada what he wishes to know, since Nārada witnessed it all (40).
31 (31; 1088). Yudhiṣṭhira asks Nārada to tell him of Svarṇaṣṭhīvin's origin, and Nārada does. He and Parvata had stayed comfortably with King Sṛñjaya for several years, and they offered to grant the king whatever he wished as they departed (1–10). Sṛñjaya requested a son who might rival Indra. Parvata told him he would have such a son, that he would excrete gold, and that he would be short-lived because of his rivalry with Indra (10–15). Sṛñjaya asked that the seers prevent his early death, but Nārada promised only to revive the boy after his death (15–20). The boy was born, and Indra feared him. Indra commissioned his lightning bolt to become a tiger and kill the boy. The lightning stalked the boy and then mauled him in a wood on the bank of the Gaṅgā (20–35). Sṛñjaya mourned his dead son. Nārada appeared to him, consoled him, and restored the boy to life, and Svarṇaṣṭhīvin reigned as a great king for over one thousand years (35–45). Nārada encourages Yudhiṣṭhira to stop grieving and take up the burden of kingship (45).
32 (32; 1135). Vyāsa speaks up in praise of Law and argues that kings must use force to restrain men who violate Law (1–5). Yudhiṣṭhira objects that he burns with guilt over the deaths he has caused (5–10). Vyāsa describes five different ways to understand responsibility for actions, and he argues that Yudhiṣṭhira is blameless from each perspective. Vyāsa supports the position that action is done freely and is effective in shaping the events of the world (10–20). He counsels Yudhiṣṭhira to perform expiation while he still has the chance to do so (20).
33 (33; 1160). Yudhiṣṭhira continues to lament all the men he has killed. He grieves in particular for the hardship he has inflicted upon the women of these men (1–10). Vowing to perform asceticism, he asks Vyāsa to tell him about good hermitages (10).
34 (33; 1172). Vyāsa preaches an intricate and important sermon. Invoking the kṣatriya Law and Time (Time in its lordly form uses beings to slay beings), he tells Yudhiṣṭhira that those killed were villains with wicked intentions, while Yudhiṣṭhira is still virtuous since he was compelled to do what he did (1–10). Yudhiṣṭhira's bloody actions in support of Law follow bloody examples set by the Gods. Sometimes Law looks like what is contrary to Law; Yudhiṣṭhira is capable of discerning this, and he should settle down and enjoy his victory (10–20). The evil of Yudhiṣṭhira's actions can be and should be expiated by performing the Horse Sacrifice after the example of Indra (20–25). Yudhiṣṭhira should take the consecration as king of the realm, gratify his followers, stop mourning, and rule (30–35).
35 (34; 1208). Yudhiṣṭhira asks when it is that one is obliged to perform expiation. Vyāsa lists various deeds and situations that require expiation, prāyaścitta, *by the person responsible (1–15). Vyāsa then lists various deeds and situations that might appear to be wrong but are not (15–30).*
36 (35; 1241). Vyāsa now lists some of the observances that constitute expiation, prāyaścitta *(1–35). He then makes a few generalizations about "the ordinance of expiation" (35–40) and he closes by assuring Yudhiṣṭhira that he will get free of the evil he has done (45).*
37 (36; 1291). In reference to Vyāsa's mentioning acceptable and unacceptable foods, and gifts and their appropriate recipients, Yudhiṣṭhira asks to learn more about these matters. Vyāsa recounts a lecture given by the ancient Progenitor Manu to some Siddhas who had asked him about the proprieties of food, gifts, recitations, and ascetic

observances (1–5). Manu began with some general dicta concerning the complexities of Law (5–15). He then gave a list of foods forbidden to brahmins (15–25). Next Manu repeatedly made the point that donations made to unworthy recipients yield no merit to the donor, or are even injurious for both the donor and the recipient. He listed various defects in recipients, emphasizing the value of giving to brahmins who recite the Vedas regularly and observe various ascetic practices (25–40).
38 (37; 1344). Yudhiṣṭhira asks for instruction on the Lawful Duties of kings; he says Law and kingship are opposed (1). Vyāsa recommends that Yudhiṣṭhira approach Bhīṣma for this instruction. He outlines Bhīṣma's vast learning (5–15). Yudhiṣṭhira protests that he has been too sinful and devious to approach the straightforward hero Bhīṣma (15). Kṛṣṇa tells him to get up and shake off his grief for the benefit of all (20–25). Yudhiṣṭhira finally relents and lets go of his anguish (25–30). Then, amidst great fanfare, he and his brothers mount a splendid chariot and lead a procession of their entire party into Hāstinapura, which gaily welcomed them all (30–45).

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

20.1 At this break in the discussion the great ascetic Devasthāna, an orator,° made this very apposite statement to Yudhiṣṭhira. "As to what Phalguna* said, 'There is nothing more excellent than wealth,' I will explain it to you. Listen to this closely.

"You won the entire earth Lawfully, Ajātaśatru,† and having won it, king, you ought not gratuitously let it go. This four-stepped ladder‡ stands on the base of deeds done; get to the top of it in the right way, great-armed 5 king, step by step. Therefore, son of Pṛthā, offer great sacrificial rites with many presents for the priests. Seers§ offer sacrificial worship with their Veda-recitations, and others offer sacrifices with their thoughts.

"Now, Bhārata, you must correctly understand pronouncements about actions and pronouncements on asceticism, such as, O Indra of kings, these statements we hear from the Vaikhānasas:

"'He who does not strive for riches is better than he who does.

"'Any fault attached to wealth can only grow greater.

* = Arjuna. † = Yudhiṣṭhira.
‡ = the four *āśramas*, the four religious Patterns of Life.
§ = *ṛṣi-s*, that is, brahmins.

"'People accumulate wealth only by producing riches with painstaking labors.

"'One who craves riches overlooks even abortion without giving it a thought.'

"Even the Law of making donations° is difficult to carry out, because one must distinguish those worthy to receive gifts from those who are not; for one may make a gift to one who is not worthy to receive it, and fail to make a gift to one who is worthy.

10 * "The Creator made riches for the rites of sacrificial worship; man has been ordained to be both a sacrificer and a preserver of riches. So all wealth is to be used in the rites of sacrifice; the fruit one desires° comes directly from that.

† "The mighty Indra rose over all the Gods through diverse sacrifices consisting of food. In this way he came to be 'Indra,' and he shines forth radiantly. So all wealth is to be used in the rites of sacrifice.

"The Great God,‡ the exalted, expansive God of Gods, poured himself as the offering in a Sacrifice of All Things. Having pervaded all the worlds and reinforced them with his glory,§ that luminous Kṛttivāsas‖ shines over them all radiantly.

"King Marutta, son of Avikṣit,° was a mortal who conquered with his marvelous wealth the king of the Gods. The Goddess Royal Splendor herself entered into his sacrifice, where all the implements for the rite were made of gold.

"And you have heard that Hariścandra,° that Indra of kings who did pious deeds, shed his grief by offering rites of sacrifice. And, though merely a man, he conquered Śakra# with his wealth. So all wealth is to be used in the rites of sacrifice."

Devasthāna said:

21.1 On this they also recite an ancient account of what Bṛhaspati said one time when questioned by Indra.

"Contentment is most heavenly. Contentment is the highest happiness. Nothing surrounds a person more excellently than contentment.

* One mixed triṣṭubh stanza; see the technical endnote for 20.10–14.
† Four almost classical śālinī triṣṭubh stanzas.
‡ = Śiva; see endnote at 20.12.
§ = *kīrtyā*; this word is intended to explain the name Kṛttivāsas.
‖ = "Clad in skins"; Śiva. # = Indra.

"When someone draws his desires all the way in, the way a turtle draws its limbs in, then the light of the Self, the Self itself, becomes clear and bright on its own.

"When a man fears nothing and no one fears him, then that man conquers desire and aversion and sees the Self.

5 "When one has no anger toward any being and wrongs no being in action, thought, or word, then he attains to perfection as *brahman*."

So it is, son of Kuntī,° that beings look to this and that Law in this way and that way at one time and another. Pay attention to this, Bhārata. Some recommend quiet calm, others vigorous exercise; some recommend neither the one nor the other, and others recommend both. Some men recommend sacrifice, and others recommend renunciation. Some recommend giving, and others recommend receiving. Some others renounce everything and sit still in silent meditation. Some recommend kingship, the protecting of all creatures by slaying, shattering, and cleaving enemies and wrongdoers; and others live a solitary life.

10 This is the definitive conclusion of the wise, after considering all this: "The Law that is esteemed by the pious is the one that does no harm° to beings—harmlessness, speaking the truth, sharing, loyalty, forbearance, procreating on one's own wife, gentleness, modesty, and steadiness."

Manu, the offspring of the Self-Existent Being,* said that wealth was decidedly the most important part of Law. Therefore son of Kuntī, watch over your subjects diligently. The one who is established in the kingship should be a kṣatriya who is always in control of himself, who takes the disagreeable and the agreeable in the same way, who eats the remnants of sacrifices, who knows the real meaning of the teachings for kings, who knows Law and, having established his subjects on the road of Law, is

15 engaged in restraining the wicked and encouraging the good. (After transferring his wealth to his son, a man who is not exhausted may live out his time° while living in the forest upon forest fare in accordance with the prescriptions of ascetics.) Both this world and the next one will be rewarding for the king who is resolved upon the Law of kings and acts in this way. And on the other hand, in my judgment, it is extremely difficult to get to Extinction;† there are many obstacles to it.

Kings who have followed Law in this way; who have been dedicated to asceticism, making gifts, and truthfulness; who have been endowed with kindly virtues, devoid of desire and anger, engaged in the protection of subjects, and dedicated to the highest self-control, have gained the course

* Manu Svāyaṃbhuva, the same Manu whose teachings appear in *The Authoritative Teaching of the Laws*, not Manu the son of Vivasvat, from whom the world's current kings all descended.

† = *nirvāṇa;* see endnote at 21.16.

that goes the farthest by waging war for the sake of cows and brahmins. So, scorcher of your enemies, Rudras, Vasus, and Ādityas, and Sādhyas, and throngs of seers who were kings have resorted to this Law. They were never negligent of it, and so they reached heaven by their own pious deeds.

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

22.1 At this break in the discussion Arjuna spoke again and made this statement to his eldest brother, his lord, whose mind was sunk in depression.

"O you who know Law, you have won an unsurpassable kingdom and conquered your enemies by way of the *kṣatra* Law. O best of men, why do you grieve so profoundly? Great king, tradition teaches that death in battle is more excellent for kṣatriyas than offering many sacrifices. Recall the *kṣatra* Law to your mind! Tradition teaches that asceticism and renunciation are the rule for gaining Merit for the next life for brahmins,

5 while death in battle is enjoined for kṣatriyas. O best of the Bharatas, tradition knows the *kṣatra* Law is extremely terrifying, as it always involves weapons, and eventually there is death by the sharp blades of weapons in battle. And, king, even when a brahmin observes the *kṣatra* Law, people praise his life, for *kṣatra* is entirely based in *brahman*. But, O lord of men, renunciation, begging, and asceticism are not prescribed for kṣatriyas, nor is living upon others.

"You know all Laws, you are mindful of everything. O bull of the Bharatas, you are a wise and skillful king who has seen the high and the low in the world. Let go of the sorrow born of your pain and armor yourself for action. The hearts of kṣatriyas in particular are as hard as diamonds.

10 O Indra among men, having conquered your enemies by way of the *kṣatra* Law, having gained the kingdom with the thorn extracted from it, now conquer yourself and devote yourself to sacrifices and the making of gifts. Indra was a son of Brahmā;° he became a kṣatriya through his deeds—he killed nine nineties of his own wicked kinsmen. And that deed of his should be honored and praised, O lord of peoples—we have been taught that that is how he came to be the Indra of the Gods. With your fever finally gone, offer sacrifices just as Indra did, O Indra of men, in rites that give many presents to the priests.

"You should not grieve one bit for anyone who departed in this way, O bull among kṣatriyas. They all went the furthest course, doing the *kṣatra*

15 Law, purified on the sharp blades of weapons. What has happened had to be so, O bull of the Bharatas, for it was ordained, O tiger among kings. It could not have been averted."

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

23.1 Bhārata,* that scion of Kuru and son of Kuntī† said nothing when Guḍākeśa‡ was finished, so Dvaipāyana§ spoke. "This statement of

* = Janamejaya. † = Yudhiṣṭhira. ‡ = Arjuna. § = Vyāsa.

Bībhatsu's* is completely true, Yudhiṣṭhira. Tradition teaches that the highest Law envisioned in the teachings is the Life-Pattern of householding. Do the Law that is proper to yourself as it has been taught, as it has been enjoined, O you who know Law. Rejecting householding and going to the forest is not what is prescribed for you. Gods, ancestors, seers, and servants always live off of the householder, so serve them, O lord of the
5 earth. Birds, beasts, and creatures are supported by householders alone, so the householder has the most excellent Life-Pattern. Of the four Life-Patterns this one is the most difficult to perform. Live this Pattern of Life in full possession of your mind, son of Pṛthā, for it is extremely difficult to do with faculties that are weak. You have a complete knowledge of the Vedas, and you have endured tremendous ascetic suffering, so you ought to shoulder the load of ruling the kingdom of your father and grandfathers.

"Asceticism, sacrifice, learning, begging alms, the restraint of the senses, meditation, a life of solitude, contentment, and making donations—all according to one's ability—these actions are the approved means to complete perfection for brahmins. Now I will declare what they are for
10 kṣatriyas, though you already know this. Sacrifice, learning, industrious effort, noncontentment with regard to riches, the gruesome wielding of the rod of punishment, and the protection of subjects; furthermore, complete knowledge of the Veda, asceticism well performed, the acquisition of lots of material goods, and the making of gifts to worthy recipients. O lord of peoples, tradition teaches us that these actions of kings, when done well, bring about the full realization of this world and that world.† Now the most excellent of these, son of Kuntī, is said to be the wielding of the rod of punishment. For there is always power in the kṣatriya, and punishment is established upon power. These actions are the approved means to complete perfection for kṣatriyas, king.
15 "And furthermore, Bṛhaspati has spoken this verse: 'The earth swallows the king who does not fight and the brahmin who does not leave home the way a snake swallows little animals in their holes.'

"We have heard that the royal seer Sudyumna‡ attained the very highest perfection from administering the rod of punishment, like Dakṣa Prācetasa."§

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

24.1 Blessed one, what did that lord over the earth Sudyumna do to gain the very highest perfection? I want to hear about that king.

Vyāsa said:

On this they recite this ancient account. Śaṅkha and Likhita° were two

* = Arjuna. † = the next world, heaven.
‡ = ancient king famous for punishing Likhita; see the next chapter; see also the endnote.
§ = grandson of Brahmā and principal "Progenitor" (through his many daughters) of the world's beings, "the grandfather of the worlds" (*MBh* 1.70.4); see Appendix 3, Chart 1.

brothers who observed a severely restricted way of life. Each of them had a dwelling on the Bāhudā River,° and both of their places were lovely and filled with trees that were always in bloom or bearing fruit. One time Likhita went to Śaṅkha's hermitage, but Śaṅkha happened to have
5 stepped out. After he entered his brother's hermitage, Likhita shook down some ripe fruit. That brahmin took the fruit and ate it without thinking about it. Śaṅkha returned to the hermitage while Likhita was eating. When he saw his brother eating, Śaṅkha asked him, "Where did you get the fruit? What right do you have to eat this?" Likhita rinsed his mouth and greeted his elder brother, and then he said to him with a little smile, "I took them from right here." Śaṅkha was extremely angry and said to him, "You have committed theft by taking this fruit on your own! Go to
10 the king and denounce yourself before him! Say, 'O most excellent of kings, I took something which was not given. Now that you know I am a thief, adhere to your Law and quickly have me punished as a thief, O overlord of men.'"

O strong-armed man, after his brother said this, Likhita, who was very strict in his behavior,° followed his command and went to that overlord of the earth, Sudyumna. When King Sudyumna heard from his border-guards that Likhita had come, that lord of men and his ministers went out on foot to meet him. After meeting him the king said to Likhita, who knew the *brahman* so very well, "Tell me what you have come for, blessed one, and it is done." That brahmin seer replied to King Sudyumna, "I have made a promise.° And you have said 'I will act.' So once you hear me you
15 should do what I need. O bull among men, I ate fruit which had not been granted to me by my superior. Punish me for that, king, immediately."

Sudyumna said:

Sir, if you regard the king to be the authority for administering your punishment, then he may also be the agent of your pardon, O bull among brahmins. Your deeds are pure, and you undertake tremendous vows—you, sir, are pardoned.

Now tell me what wishes you have besides this one, and I shall do what you say.

Vyāsa said:

Though the seer of the *brahman* was very pleased with the exalted king, he wished to receive no favor from the king besides being punished. So that protector of the earth had the exalted Likhita's two hands cut off, and
20 Likhita then left, having borne his punishment. He went to his brother Śaṅkha and, in great pain, he said to him, "Blessed one, I who was stupid have now borne my punishment, please forgive me."

Śaṅkha said:

I am not angry with you, O knower of Law, and you do not offend me. You violated Law, so you made atonement. Go quickly to the Bāhudā and

offer refreshment to the Gods, ancestors, and seers in the prescribed way. Do not let your heart settle into evil.*

Vyāsa said:

Upon hearing Śaṅkha's answer, Likhita waded into the holy river and began the water-rite, and his two hands reappeared, looking like two
25 lotuses. He was amazed and showed his hands to his brother. Śaṅkha told him, "I did this with my ascetic power. Have no doubt of it, a miracle has occurred."

Likhita said:

My illustrious brother, O best of brahmins, why did you not purify me before, if your asceticism had such power as this?

Śaṅkha said:

I had to act this way; I was not the one to inflict punishment upon you. The king has been purified by this, and so have his ancestors, and you have been too.

Vyāsa said:

O most excellent of the Pāṇḍavas, that splendid king attained supreme perfection through this deed, like Dakṣa Prācetasa.° This is the Law of kṣatriyas: Watching over subjects. Do not let your mind settle into sorrow,
30 great king; that is the wrong course. O best of the knowers of Law, listen to what your brother has said, it is good for you. For truly the rod of force is the *kṣatra* Law, O Indra of kings, while shaving the head† is not.

Vaiśampāyana said:

25.1 Once again the great seer Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana spoke to Ajātaśatru, the son of Kuntī, and made this significant speech.

"Yudhiṣṭhira, my son, your brothers, these great warriors, must have those things they wished for while they lived in the forest and suffered so wretchedly. O best of the Bharatas, son of Pṛthā, rule the earth like Yayāti son of Nahuṣa. These poor wretches experienced the painful life of the forest, and now that the misery is over, these tigers among men should
5 know comfort. O lord of peoples, you will go on your way‡ after experiencing the pursuits of Merit, Riches, and Pleasures with your brothers, Bhārata. Discharge all the debts you owe to guests, ancestors, and Gods, son of Kuntī, and then, Bhārata, you shall go to heaven. Sacrifice with the Sacrifice of All Things and the Horse Sacrifice, O joy of the Kurus, and after that, great king, you will travel the course that goes furthest. Having set all your brothers to perform rites endowed with profuse gifts for the priests, you shall realize unequaled fame, O Pāṇḍava.

"We know what you have to say, O tiger among men, joy of the Kurus, now hear from me how a king doing his duties does not deviate from Law.

* = *adharma.*
† That is, embracing the life of renunciation.
‡ That is, leave home, set out for the forest.

10 "Those well-versed in Law fix the punishment of one who takes the wealth of another to be the same amount, Yudhiṣṭhira. A king who relies on theories coming from learned teachings and makes a thief pay a fine contingent upon time and place incurs no sin.

"A king who takes a sixth part as tax but does not protect the country acquires a fourth part of the country's evil deeds.

"A king carrying out his duties does not lose any of his Merit. He may be free of all fear due to his inflicting punishments if he adheres to the learned teachings on Law, is not subject to lust or wrath, and has an equal regard for all, like a father.

"Illustrious one, when the occasion for performing some task has been afflicted by some extraordinary circumstance° and the king suspends its performance, they do not call that a transgression.

15 "Enemies must be destroyed, either immediately or after careful forethought.

"The king should not form alliances with wicked men, and he should not put the country up for sale.°

"Heroic warriors, the noble people, and the learned should be treated well, Yudhiṣṭhira; and those who have cattle and those who are wealthy should be protected especially well.

"Highly learned men should be employed in proceedings involving Law.

"The discriminating king should not put his trust in any one person, not even in one who is virtuous.

"The king who does not protect his subjects, who is ill-mannered, haughty, arrogant, and resentful incurs sin and is said to lack self-control.

"When the king is smitten by some extraordinary force and his subjects, who are left unprotected, are assaulted by thieves, that is all the fault of the king.

20 "Yudhiṣṭhira, there is no bad karma* in any human action which has been well considered in council, is carried out well, and accomplished according to prescriptions.

"Undertakings miscarry or are fulfilled on account of fate; but in what is done by the people involved, no sin touches the king.

* = *adharma*, that is, the opposite of Merit.

"In this regard, O tiger among kings, I shall relate this account of the accomplishments of the ancient royal seer Hayagrīva, a tireless heroic warrior, who was killed as he battled slaying his enemies, who fought bravely all by himself° and was conquered.

> * "The work the king does° destroying his enemies is his principal task in protecting his people; having done that work and gained fame in great battles, Vājigrīva † delights in the world of the Gods.
>
> 25 "Tormented by barbarian enemies, attacking in battle with abandon, though cut by sharp weapons, the exalted Aśvagrīva was devoted to his work—completely perfected, he delights in the world of the Gods.
>
> "His bow was the sacrificial stake, his bowstring its tether, his arrow the long *sruc* spoon, his sword the *sruva* ladle, blood the clarified butter for the offering, his chariot, which went at his mere wishing, was the Vedi altar area, battle was the fire, his four superb horses the team of four priests. Having poured his enemies as an offering into that fire, that bold lion of a king was freed from his evil deeds. Having poured his own life out in battle at the concluding bath of the rite, Vājigrīva delights in the world of the Gods.
>
> "Guarding his kingdom with policy well considered beforehand, this exalted king devoted to sacrificial worship gave himself up completely;° a wise king, he was famous in every realm; and now Vājigrīva delights in the world of the Gods.
>
> "By various works and plans that exalted king who was devoted to Law protected the means of perfection ‡ in the divine realm, the administration of punishment in the human realm, and the earth as well, and now Hayagrīva delights in the world of heaven.
>
> 30 "This king was a learned man, a renouncer, an enthusiastic believer, a man who felt gratitude. Having done his work and left the human world, having ascended to the world of those wise, learned, esteemed ones who have left the body behind, having acquired the Vedas perfectly, having studied the learned teachings, having protected the kingdom perfectly, having

* A proto-śālinī triṣṭubh passage of ten stanzas.
† = Hayagrīva.
‡ = the rites of sacrificial worship, *yajña*.

> established the four Orders of society in their proper Laws, the exalted Vājigrīva delights in the world of the Gods.
>
> "Having won wars, having protected his subjects, having drunk the Soma,* having gratified the foremost brahmins, having administered the rod of punishment appropriately to his subjects, he perished in battle, and now he delights in the world of the Gods.
>
> "Pious, learned men, themselves worthy of honor, honor the praiseworthy accomplishments of that exalted king. Having won heaven and gone to the celestial worlds of heroes, he of good fame has arrived at his perfection."

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

26.1 After hearing what Dvaipāyana said, Yudhiṣṭhira the son of Kuntī saluted Vyāsa and answered him while Dhanaṃjaya † remained angry. "Neither ruling the earth nor its many different luxuries bring me any joy now. My burning grief makes me rave. After hearing the lament of the women deprived of their men and their sons, I find no peace, sage."

Vyāsa, the best of those who know the discipline of yoga meditation, consummate virtuoso of the Vedas, and one who knew Law, answered the very wise Yudhiṣṭhira.

> 5 ‡ "One does not get anything through his deeds,° nor by his worrying; nor does anyone give anything to any person. Everything the Arranger has ordained for a man is acquired in Time through the operation of its turning.
>
> "Individual men do not get anything when it is not the Time for it, not even by studying philosophy.° Even a fool gains riches now and then; Time makes no distinctions with regard to its effect.
>
> "When it is not Time for prospering, not craft, nor Vedic formulas, nor medicines yield any benefit. But when it is Time to prosper, these same things are joined together by Time and they get fired up and are effective.
>
> "Through Time swift winds blow, through Time moisture reaches clouds, through Time bodies of water come to have the different kinds of lotuses upon them, through Time trees flourish in the forests.

* See "Soma" in the glossary and the endnote to 12.35–36.
† = Arjuna.
‡ A passage of eight upajāti triṣṭubh stanzas.

"Through Time nights are cool and dark, through Time the moon becomes a full orb, trees do not have fruits and flowers except through Time, rivers do not flow with rushing currents outside of Time.

10 "Birds, snakes, small animals, elephants, and the great hunting beasts of the mountains—none of these come into rut apart from Time. Babies do not grow in mothers apart from Time. The cool, hot, and rainy seasons do not come except in Time.

"One does not die, nor is one born except through Time, a child does not learn to talk except through Time, nor does he reach youth except through Time. A seed sown does not grow except in Time.

"The sun does not come to its work except through Time, nor does it set behind the mountains except through Time. The moon does not wax or wane except through Time, nor is the ocean graced with billowing waves.

"On this, Yudhiṣṭhira, they recite this ancient account, a song sung by King Senajit° when he was plagued with misery.

" 'This inevitable turning° touches all mortals, for, ripened by Time, all men die.

15 " ' "But* men kill other men,° king, and then other men kill those first men as well."

" 'This† is the conventional understanding, king. In fact, no one kills, no one is killed. "Some think, 'He kills,' while others think, 'No one kills.' " The coming into being and passing away of beings is fixed according to their basic natures.

" 'When one's wealth has vanished, or when one's wife, or son, or father, has died, one can arrive at an end of the grief by thinking, "Ah, this is a hardship."°

" 'Why do you mourn, fool? As you too will be mourned, why do you mourn? Look at your miseries amidst all miseries, and your fears amidst all fears.

" 'This self is not mine, though the entire earth is mine. And he who sees that, just as it is "mine," so it is others' too, does not err.

* An objection made by unnamed interlocutor, who seems also to be a king; see the endnotes.

† Senajit answers the objection.

20 " 'Day after day thousands of occasions for grief and hundreds of occasions for joy come upon the fool, but not the wise man of reasoning. In time these become objects of attachment and aversion in their due proportions, and so sorrows and joys alternate in living beings.

" ' "There* exists only misery, there is no happiness. Therefore, that is what is perceived."

" 'Misery originates in the pain of craving, and happiness originates in the pain of misery. Misery is right next to happiness, happiness is right next to misery. One does not get constant misery, nor does one get constant happiness. For there is happiness at the end of miseries and misery at the end of happiness. Therefore, whoever wants everlasting happiness should discard this pair.

25 " 'For whatever reason one has grief or an affliction, or might be benumbed with misery, whatever may be the root of one's troubles, he should get rid of that, even if it is one of the limbs of his body.

" 'Unconquered in his heart, one should regard what has come to him simply as "what has come to me," whether it be happiness or misery, whether it be something hateful or something dear.

" ' "Just† do something a little bit disagreeable to your wife or your sons, and then you will know who, whose, why, and how you are."°

" 'The biggest fools in the world, and those men who have gone past the Higher Mind‡ both prosper happily; those in the middle are afflicted.'

"So, Yudhiṣṭhira, did the very wise Senajit say—Senajit who knew the high and the low of the world, who knew Law, who knew happiness and misery.

30 "A person who is happy at the misery of another° would not be happy at all. There is no end of miseries, for later ones arise from the earlier ones.

§ "Happiness and misery, being and nonbeing, gaining and losing, death and life touch everyone here in turns, and thus a wise person neither thrills with joy nor gets angry.

‖ "They say that the king's watching over the kingdom and fighting wars is the consecration for his undertaking a sacrificial rite;

* Again there is an outside objection.

† Again, an outside objection.

‡ Through a process of meditational "ascent" in yoga meditation.

§ A single mixed triṣṭubh stanza; see the endnote.

‖ Four almost perfect, classical śālinī triṣṭubh stanzas follow; see the endnote.

"That his perfect administration of the rod of force in his kingdom is yoga meditation for him.

"His making presents to the priests in sacrificial rites is the renunciation of riches for him;

"And his perfect Knowledge constitutes his purificatory rites.°

"The exalted king who guards his kingdom with policy that is thought through beforehand, who has completely abandoned himself, who is dedicated to performing the rites of sacrifice, and who moves through all the worlds as an embodiment of Law—that king delights in the world of the Gods after leaving his body.

"Having won battles, having watched over his kingdom, having drunk Soma, having caused his subjects to prosper, having administered the rod of punishment to his subjects, and having perished in battle, the king delights in the world of the Gods.

"Having acquired the Vedas perfectly, having studied the learned teachings, having watched over his kingdom perfectly, having established the four Orders of society in their proper Laws, having been purified, the king delights in the world of the Gods.

"He whose accomplishments the people of the town and the countryside and the royal household worship even after he has gone to heaven—that man is the king, the most excellent of kings."

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

27.1 Abhimanyu—just a boy!—was killed in that war, and so were the sons of Draupadī; so too Dhṛṣṭadyumna, Virāṭa, the great lord Drupada, Vasuṣeṇa,* who knew Law, and King Dhṛṣṭaketu, and other kings from many different countries. My pain does not leave me! And my suffering is excruciating, because my lust to rule the kingdom caused the slaughter of my kinsmen and a break in the line of my ancestors.

Greedy for the kingdom I caused Gāṅgeya's† fall—I used to roll around playing on his lap! When I saw him reeling under the arrows of Pṛthā's son,‡ shaking as if hit by lightning bolts, but taking notice only of Śikhaṇḍin;§ when I saw my grandfather, that lofty lion among men, act like a decrepit old lion as Arjuna's sharp arrows were being heaped upon him—then my heart broke. When I saw him fallen from his chariot because of the arrows, and then sitting, facing the east, like some mountain

* = Karṇa. † = Bhīṣma. ‡ = Arjuna.
§ That is, taking no notice of Arjuna, who assaulted him while screened by Śikhaṇḍin; see the description of Arjuna's felling of Bhīṣma in the LCP s.v. "Bhīṣma."

tottering back and forth, I was deeply shocked. That Kaurava who took bow and arrow in hand and fought the Bhārgava* for many days in a great battle on the Field of Kuru; that heroic son of the Gaṅgā River, who with his one chariot challenged the *kṣatra* royalty assembled at Benares to a fight for the sake of the three princesses;† by the heat of whose arrows the unassailable imperial ruler,° Ugrāyudha,‡ was burned up—I caused him to be killed in war!

The keeper of his own death,° he would not shoot down the Pāñcāla prince Śikhaṇḍin and so was felled by Arjuna. O best of sages, when I saw him fallen upon the earth, drenched in blood, a racking fever entered into me. He who nurtured and watched over us as children, I brought his killing to pass! Lusting to rule the kingdom, I was wicked; and now I am responsible for the killing of my elder. I was a deluded fool for the sake of ephemeral kingship.

And that great archer, our teacher,§ who was honored by all kings—wickedly I lied to him about his son° when he approached me during a battle! It burns my limbs that the teacher said to me, "Your words, king, are true. Tell me if my son is alive." Thinking me truthful, the brahmin asked me that. I acted falsely by saying "elephant" under my breath.‖ Lusting intensely to rule the kingdom, I was wicked, and now I am responsible for the killing of my teacher! I put a little jacket on the truth° and told my teacher in the battle, "Aśvatthāman has been killed," when it was only an elephant that had been killed.# What heavenly worlds will I go to now that I've done this dreadful deed?

Who has ever done anything more wicked than I did when I caused my elder brother to be killed, the ferocious Karṇa who never fled any battle? Or when I in my greed made Abhimanyu—that boy was like a lion just born in the mountains!°—penetrate the army that Droṇa protected. Since then I have been like a man guilty of abortion, and I haven't been able to look Bībhatsu** or lotus-eyed Kṛṣṇa†† in the eye. And I grieve for Draupadī! Draupadī deserves comfort not misery, but now she has lost five sons!° It is as if the earth had lost five mountains.

I am a wicked sinner responsible for ruining the earth. Sitting right here just like this, I will dry this body up. Realize that I, the one responsible for killing our elders, am now sitting in a fast to the death,‡‡ so that I will not be a destroyer of the family in other births as well. I will not eat or drink

* = Rāma Jāmadagnya; see *MBh* 5.170–87.
† See *MBh* 1.96; here and in that earlier passage, the city is *vārāṇasī.*
‡ = a ruler otherwise unknown in the *MBh.*
§ = Droṇa.
‖ See the LCP s.v. "Yudhiṣṭhira" for this crucial incident.
\# To set up Yudhiṣṭhira's lie, Bhīma had killed an elephant named Aśvatthāman.
** = Arjuna, father of Abhimanyu.
†† = Abhimanyu's maternal uncle.
‡‡ = *prāya;* see the glossary.

anything at all. I will stay right here and dry up the dear breath of life,
25 O ascetic.* Go wherever you like, all of you.

Please! I kindly bid you all farewell. You must all bid me farewell, I am abandoning this body.

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

As the son of Pṛthā, his mind addled with grief for his kin, was saying this, Vyāsa stopped him. The most excellent of sages said, "Do not be like this! Great king, you ought not grieve so excessively. I will declare to you once again what has already been said: This was fated, lord. The conjunctions and separations of living creatures are fixed once they are born. Like bubbles in water, they are there and then they are not. All aggregations end in dissolution, every ascent ends in a fall, connections
30 end in separations, life ends in death. Laziness is comfort that ends in pain, industry is pain that gives rise to comfort. Well-being and Royal Splendor, timidity, perseverance, and success do not dwell with anyone who lacks industry. Friends are not sufficient for happiness, and enemies are not sufficient for misery; wisdom is not sufficient for riches, and riches are not sufficient for happiness. As the Creator has made you for deeds, O son of Kuntī, do them. Your perfection will come just from that. You are not your own master all by yourself,° king."

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

28.1 Vyāsa drove off the grief of Pāṇḍu's eldest son, who was tormented by grief over his kinsmen and wanted to abandon his life.

Vyāsa said:

On this, Yudhiṣṭhira, tiger among men, they recite this ancient account sung by Aśman. Pay attention to it. Janaka, the King of Videha, overwhelmed with grief and misery, questioned the wise brahmin Aśman on a doubtful matter.

Janaka said:

If kinsmen, or property, just come or go, how should a man who wants to be well off behave?

Aśman said:

5 Various miseries and pleasures come upon a man's person as soon as he arises. When either one of these occurs, whichever he pays attention to seizes his mind the way the wind seizes a cloud. His mind becomes steeped in arguments like these three: "I am well born. I am fully perfected. I am not a mere human being." With his mind saturated like this, he squanders the possessions his fathers have accumulated. Then, insolvent, he comes to think it is right to take what belongs to others. When he transgresses the law and takes things improperly, the rulers stop him the way hunters stop
10 game with arrows. Such men have twenty years, or thirty years; these men will never live past that to a hundred years.°

* = Vyāsa.

Through some insight one might figure out a medicine for those with the most extreme miseries by examining the behavior of all living creatures in this way and that way. Now, the sources of mental miseries are perturbations in the mind, or the sudden onset of something unwelcome—there is no third one.

"All the various miseries°* that beset a man in this world are like these, and then there are those that impinge from without."°

Like two wolves, old age and death feed upon beings—upon the strong
15 and the weak, upon the small and the great. No man whatever can evade old age and death, not even a man who has conquered this earth to its ocean boundaries.

Whether it is happiness or misery that is at hand for creatures, they must take all of it whether they will or no; there is never any exemption. Early in life, in mid-life, or late in life there are things that cannot be avoided. The ones that people wish for are just the opposite.† Separation from what we cherish and connection to what we dislike, good things, bad things, happiness, misery—they all follow what has been ordained. The appearance of beings, their leaving their bodies behind, and the connection
20 between acquisition and exertion—it is all settled. Smells, colors, tastes, and touches cease naturally, and so do pleasures and pains—they follow what has been ordained. Sitting, lying down, going, rising, drinking, and eating occur invariably in all beings in accordance with Time. Physicians suffer sickness, as do the mighty and the weak, and men with wives and eunuchs both—the turning of Time is highly varied. Birth in a good family, manly strength, health, steadfastness, good fortune, indulgence—these are acquired through destiny. Poor people, who do not want them, have numerous children; while many rich people who do want them, and
25 who exert themselves to get them, have none. Disease, fire, water, a sharp blade, hunger, a predatory beast, poison, rope, and falling from a height—these can be a person's death. When someone's death has been appointed, he goes for that reason. No one is ever seen evading it, and no one ever has evaded it. A rich man is seen passing away as a youth, while a poor wretch lives a hundred years. Men who have nothing at all are seen to live a long time, while those born in rich families pass on like bugs.° For the most part the wealthy in this world are not able to enjoy what they have, while the poor wear out even their wooden things.

30 "I am doing this," thinks a wicked man as he does some evil deed or another because he is discontented; but he is propelled by Time. Women, dice, hunting, drinking—these are condemned by the wise because of their consequences, but many highly learned men are observed to be addicted to them. So in the course of Time all sorts of things, desirable and

* An objection; see the endnotes.
† They are hard to get at any time.

undesirable alike, beset every creature,° and the cause in any instance is not perceived. Wind, Ether, Fire, sun and moon, day and night, the stars, rivers, mountains—who makes these and supports them? Winter, summer, and the rains revolve in the course of Time, and just so do the
35 pleasures and miseries of men. Not medicines, nor the learned teachings, nor sacrificial libations, nor the recitation of holy sayings will save that man to whom death or old age have come.

As one stick and another stick might come together upon the great ocean and then, having come together, go back apart, so is the association of creatures. Some men are attended by men and women singing and playing instruments, while others have no protectors and take their food from strangers—Time treats them all the same. Men experience thousands of mothers and fathers and hundreds of wives and children in their rebirths—to whom do they belong? To whom do we belong? No one will belong to him and he belongs to no one. We have just happened to meet
40 along the way all the throngs of our wives, relatives, and friends. Since life with his dear ones is transitory in rebirth, which goes round like a wheel,° a man should arrest his heart with thoughts like "Where was I? Where am I? Where will I go? Who am I? Why am I here? Why should I mourn, and whom should I mourn?"

Wise men know that the next world has never been seen directly; one who wants to go there must stay within what is taught by tradition and trustingly surrender himself.°* A man of learning should do the rites for the ancestors and the Gods, perform his Lawful Duties,° offer the rites of sacrificial worship according to the injunctions, and pursue the Group of Three.†

The world is sinking all the way down in the deep ocean of Time with its great monsters old age and death, and no one pays attention to this. Many physicians who have studied nothing but the medical Veda and its
45 auxiliaries are observed to be plagued with diseases. They drink astringent potions and various concoctions of butter, but they do not get past death, just as the vast ocean does not go past its bounds. Those who know the elixirs that ward off old age and those who have used these elixirs for a long time are seen broken by old age the way trees are broken by large elephants. Nor do those who have undertaken asceticism escape old age and death; nor do those absorbed in repeating their daily recitation of the Veda, nor do those who make generous gifts, nor do those who make a habit of performing the rites of sacrificial worship. The days do not turn back for any beings once they are born, nor do the months, nor the years,

* To the vision of the afterlife and the means of securing it offered by Vedic tradition and the brahmins who provide it.
† = Pleasure, Success, and Law.

nor the lunar fortnights, nor the nights. So ever-varying man goes helpless upon that broad road traversed by all beings that remains unvarying through Time.

50 Whether the body comes from the soul or the soul comes from the body, we have just happened to meet our wives and other relatives along the way. There is no perpetual cohabitation with another—it does not happen even with one's own body, how could it with someone else? Where is your father now, king? And where is your grandfather now? You do not see them, nor do they see you.

No man sees heaven or hell; the Vedas are the eye of the pious—live by that in this world, king.

One who has lived the life of a celibate student should produce children and offer sacrificial worship ungrudgingly, in order to have no debts to his ancestors, the Gods, and the great seers.

55 * Performing the rites of sacrificial worship habitually, he should be committed to producing children (having previously lived the life of a celibate student), should have divided himself into two and thus pay honor both to heaven and this world,° and he should have discharged the worst secret in his heart.

Really, when a king has set the wheel turning and performs his Lawful Duties perfectly and acquires goods properly, his glory increases in all realms, mobile and immobile alike.

Vyāsa said:

The king of Videha understood the brahmin's reasoning completely, and after listening to the entire statement, his understanding had been refined and his grief had been stilled. He bid Aśman farewell and went to his palace.

And you too, unfallen one, who are the like of Indra! Let go of your grief. Rise up, be joyous! You conquered the earth through the Law of the *kṣatra*, now use it! Do not be depressed, son of Kuntī.

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

29.1 When Kuntī's son Yudhiṣṭhira, the son of Dharma, said nothing, the Pāṇḍava Guḍākeśa† said to Hṛṣīkeśa,‡ "The King of Law, that scorcher of his enemies, burns with grief for his kinsmen. He is drowning in an ocean

* Four upajāti triṣṭubhs. † = Arjuna. ‡ = Kṛṣṇa.

of grief. Revive his spirits, Mādhava.* Everyone here has been thrown into doubt once again, Janārdana. O strong-armed hero, please make his grief go away."

When the exalted Vijaya† had said this, Govinda, the Unfallen One with 5 lotus-eyes,‡ moved round the king in a circle. The King of Law could never disobey Keśava§—from the time he was a little boy, Govinda had been more dear to him than even Arjuna. The strong-armed Śauri‖ took hold of Yudhiṣṭhira's sandal-streaked arm that looked like a pillar of stone and he spoke to him disarmingly.

"Your face is beautiful, with your fine teeth and sweet eyes. It is sincere, like a fully opened lotus awakened by the sun. Tiger among men, do not keep up this body-parching grief. Those who were killed on the battlefield are no longer on hand. Like the possessions one has in a dream that are not real when one awakes, these kṣatriyas have passed on in the great war 10 of kings. All who departed were outstanding heroes who faced forward in battle; not one of them was knocked down from behind or running away. All those heroes let go of their lives and fought in the great war, and being purified by the blades of weapons they have arrived in heaven—you ought not grieve for them.

"On this they recite this ancient account of what Nārada said to Sṛñjaya,° who was tormented by grief for his son.

" 'I, and you, and all creatures, Sṛñjaya, must live without being free from pleasures and pains;° what is the complaint in this? Listen as I recount the splendid good fortune of kings.° Pay attention to this, and you 15 will be rid of your pain. After you have learned of all these majestic kings who died, set your pain aside. Listen to me now at some length.

" 'Sṛñjaya, hear about Marutta,° son of Avikṣit, who died. To his sacrificial rite, when this exalted king made an "Offering of All Things,"° came the Gods, including Indra and Varuṇa, and they were led by Bṛhaspati.# He carried on a rivalry against Śakra Śatakratu,** the king of the Gods. The learned Bṛhaspati, seeking to curry Śakra's favor, refused to serve as his†† sacrificial priest, but Saṃvarta‡‡ did serve as his priest in order to spite Bṛhaspati. In his reign as ruler of the strictly virtuous, O most excellent of kings, the earth yielded crops without being tilled, and shone beautifully with necklaces of holy shrines§§ The Viśvedevas sat as attendant courtiers at the sacrificial session of Avikṣit's son, the Winds‖‖ were there as the footmen, and the exalted Sādhyas

* = Kṛṣṇa. † = Arjuna. ‡ = Kṛṣṇa. § = Kṛṣṇa.
‖ = Kṛṣṇa. # = the priest of the Gods. ** = Indra.
†† That is, Marutta's. ‡‡ = Bṛhaspati's younger brother.
§§ According to *MBh* 14.4.2, Marutta ruled in the Golden Age, the Kṛtayuga.
‖‖ = the Maruts.

20 were there too. When the troops of Winds drank Marutta's Soma, the presents to the priests surpassed Gods, men, and Gandharvas.°

" 'Sṛñjaya, if he died, he who was four times more blessed than you and more meritorious than your son, then you should not grieve for your son.°

" 'Sṛñjaya, we have heard of Suhotra, son of Vitithi,° who died—upon whom Maghavan* showered gold throughout the year. When she acquired him, the Rich Earth's name, "Rich," became true. In his reign as lord of the realms the rivers ran with gold. When he was worshiped in that world, Maghavan rained down turtles, crabs, alligators, 25 crocodiles, and dolphins° into the rivers. The son of Vitithi was amazed when he saw that golden fish, crocodiles, and tortoises had rained down by the hundreds and the thousands. Performing sacrificial worship in a rite he had initiated, he conveyed the entire amount of gold—which had been melted down into its basic form° in Kuru's Country°—to the brahmin priests.

" 'Sṛñjaya, if he died, he who was four times more blessed than you and more meritorious than your son, then you should not grieve for your son, who made no presents to brahmins, who offered no sacrificial rites of worship. Calm yourself down, Śvaitya,° do not grieve.

" 'Sṛñjaya, we have heard of Bṛhadratha the king of Aṅga, who died—who gave away a thousand thousand white horses. Performing sacrificial worship in a rite he had initiated, he conveyed a thousand thousand girls wearing golden ornaments to the brahmin priests as 30 their presents. And he conveyed hundreds of thousands of bulls garlanded with gold, accompanied by thousands of cows, as presents for the priests. When Aṅga offered his sacrifice on the mountain called "Viṣṇu's Step," Indra was drunk with the Soma° and the brahmins were drunk with their presents. And at his sacrifices, which numbered in the hundreds, the presents to the brahmin priests surpassed Gods, men, and Gandharvas. No other man has ever been born, or will be born, who has given, or will give, the wealth Aṅga gave away in the seven basic forms of Soma ritual.°

" 'Sṛñjaya, if he died, he who was four times more blessed than you and more meritorious than your son, then you should not grieve for your son.

35 " 'Sṛñjaya, we have heard of Śibi, son of Uśīnara, who died—who enveloped the entire earth as if he were its skin, making the ground

* = Indra.

reverberate with the tremendous din of his chariots. He brought the whole earth under a single royal parasol with his single conquering chariot. At his sacrifices Śibi son of Uśīnara presented to the priests cattle and horses and wild beasts, as many as he had at the time. O Bhārata, the Progenitor thought no one among the kings of the past or the future ever had, or ever would, pick up his load except for the royal seer Śibi, son of Uśīnara, who had the energy of Indra.

" 'Sṛñjaya, if he died, he who was four times more blessed than you and more meritorious than your son, then you should not grieve for your son, who made no presents to brahmins, who offered no sacrificial rites of worship. Calm yourself down and do not grieve for him.

40 " 'Sṛñjaya, we have heard of Bharata,° the son of Duḥṣanta born of Śakuntalā; a great warrior abounding in riches and brilliance, who died—who bound thirty horses for the Gods along the Yamunā River,* twenty along the Sarasvatī, and fourteen along the Gaṅgā. Long ago Duḥṣanta's tremendously brilliant son Bharata offered rites of worship with a thousand Horse Sacrifices and a hundred Royal Consecration Sacrifices. Among all the kings, none were able to imitate that great rite of Bharata's, as mortals cannot fly in the sky with their two arms. Having bound more than a thousand horses and having laid out a sacrificial area where there were thousands of lotuses, Bharata gave them to Kaṇva.°

45 " 'Sṛñjaya, if he died, he who was four times more blessed than you and more meritorious than your son, then you should not grieve for your son.

" 'Sṛñjaya, we have heard of Rāma, the son of Daśaratha, who died—who always had compassion for his subjects as if they were his own sons, in whose realm there were no widows without protectors. When Rāma ruled the kingdom, he was the same as a father for everyone. When Rāma ruled the kingdom, Parjanya† rained down at the right times and the crops were robust; there was always an abundance of food. When Rāma ruled the kingdom, creatures never drowned in water, fire never burned without good purpose, and no one feared wild 50 animals. His subjects lived for thousands of years and had thousands of sons; when Rāma ruled, his subjects were never ill, and they gained all their ends. When Rāma ruled the kingdom, no one quarreled with anyone else—not even the women, much less the men—and all his subjects observed their Lawful Duties all the time. When Rāma ruled the kingdom, trees produced their flowers and fruits regularly without

* Given as Horse Sacrifices.
† = a God of rain in the Veda who is often identified with Indra.

disruption, and all the cows gave a full bucket of milk. Suffering grievously,° he dwelled fourteen years in the forest and then put on ten unstinting Horse Sacrifices with the three kinds of presents for the brahmin priests. Rāma ruled the kingdom for ten thousand years, a dark youth with red eyes° and the ferocity of a bull elephant in rut.

55 " 'Sṛñjaya, if he died, he who was four times more blessed than you and more meritorious than your son, then you should not grieve for your son.

" 'Sṛñjaya, we have heard of King Bhagīratha, who died—at one of whose sacrificial rites Indra drank Soma and became very drunk° (that best of the Gods, that blessed one who had punished the Daitya Pāka with death, then defeated many thousands of Asuras through the might of his arms). Performing sacrificial worship in a rite he had initiated, Bhagīratha conveyed a thousand thousand girls wearing golden ornaments to the brahmin priests as their presents. Each of the girls went on a chariot, each of the chariots was drawn by four horses, a hundred dappled elephants garlanded with gold went with each 60 chariot, a thousand horses followed behind each and every elephant, a thousand cows behind each horse, and a thousand sheep and goats behind each cow.* Once, in the past, when he was living up in the hills,° the river Gaṅgā Bhāgīrathī sat upon his lap and thus became "Urvaśī."† Gaṅgā, who travels a course through all three worlds, approached Bhagīratha,° scion of Ikṣvāku,‡ who was offering sacrificial worship accompanied by copious presents for the priests, and she became his daughter.

" 'Sṛñjaya, if he died, he who was four times more blessed than you and more meritorious than your son, then you should not grieve for your son.

" 'Sṛñjaya, we have heard of Dilīpa,° the son of Ilavila, who died—65 brahmins tell of his numerous rites. This pious king gave this wealth-endowed earth to the brahmins in a great rite of sacrificial worship. At every single one of the rites he undertook, he conveyed to his main priest a thousand elephants made of gold. For his rites he had a big, ornate slaughter-post made out of gold. The Gods who were performing the work of the rite, Śakra§ foremost among them, would come to that

* This makes one million maidens on one million chariots pulled by four million horses, followed by one hundred million elephants, one hundred billion horses, one hundred trillion cows, and one hundred quadrillion sheep and goats!
† A pun: "Urvaśī" is here taken from *ūru*, "thigh," + √*aś*, come to, arrive at" (the final *u* of *ūru* becomes *v* before the initial vowel of √*aś*); see endnote at 29.61.
‡ Ikṣvāku was the founder of the so-called solar dynasty of ancient Indian kings (the Bharatas belong to the lunar dynasty); see Chart 1 in Appendix 3.
§ = Indra.

post. The hitching ring at the top of that post was also made of gold. Six thousand celestial Gandharvas would dance around that golden post, and the Gandharva Viśvāvasu himself would play the seven notes of the lute° in their midst. Everyone there would think, "He is playing for me." 70 No other kings could duplicate this deed of King Dilīpa's: The fact that women decked out in gold could be lying drunk and asleep in the road.* His words were always true, and any who saw the very exalted King Dilīpa when he had picked up his terrible bow went to heaven. Three sounds never died out in Dilīpa's palace: The sound of the Veda being rehearsed, the sound of the bowstring twanging, and the words "I give to you."°

" 'Sṛñjaya, if he died, he who was four times more blessed than you and more meritorious than your son, then you should not grieve for your son.

" 'Sṛñjaya, we have heard of Māndhātar, the son of Yuvanāśva, who 75 died—whom the Marut Gods took as a baby out of his father's side. A king possessing Royal Splendor who conquered all the three worlds, he started from an offering mixture° of butter and curds and then grew in the belly of the exalted Yuvanāśva. The Gods saw him lying on his father's lap, looking like a God, and they said to each other, "Whom will he suckle?" Saying, "He will suckle me,"† Indra descended to him. (Thus did Śatakratu give him a name, "Māndhātar.") And then Indra's hand spouted a stream of milk into the mouth of Yuvanāśva's son for that exalted one's nourishment. Drinking from Indra's hand, he grew a year 80 with each day, and in twelve days he was a twelve-year-old. In a single day this entire earth came to belong to that exalted man who was mindful of Law, that hero the equal of Indra in battle. Māndhātar conquered the kings Āṅgāra, Marutta, Asita, Gaya, and the Aṅga Bṛhadratha in war. When Yuvanāśva's son fought Āṅgāra in war, the Gods thought the sky had been rent by the sounds of his bow-shots. From where the sun rises to where it sets, all of that is held to be the "Field of Māndhātar, son of Yuvanāśva." When he offered worship with a hundred Horse Sacrifices and a hundred Royal Consecration 85 Sacrifices, this king gave the brahmins Rohita fish° made of gold; these were one *yojana* wide and ten *yojanas* long.° The other people divided up what of them was left over.

" 'Sṛñjaya, if he died, he who was four times more blessed than you and more meritorious than your son, then you should not grieve for your son.

* Meant to signify the high degree of safety King Dilīpa provided for his subjects.
† = *mām eva dhāsyati*, that is, *mān* + √*dhā* + *tar*; see the etymological explanation in the endnote at 29.76.

" 'Sṛñjaya, we have heard of Yayāti,° the son of Nahuṣa, who died—who conquered this entire earth with its oceans. Traversing the earth by the distance a *śamī* stick could be tossed, he went all over the earth performing sacrificial worship with holy rituals, decorating the earth with sacrificial altars. Having performed sacrificial worship with a thousand rituals and a hundred Draft of Strength Sacrifices,* he 90 refreshed the Indra of the Gods with thirty mountains of gold. Having slain Daiteyas and Dānavas in the prolonged war between the Gods and the Asuras, Yayāti son of Nahuṣa divided up the entire earth: After appointing his sons Yadu and Druhyu and so on to peripheral kingdoms, and after consecrating Pūru† to succeed him as king in his own kingdom, he set out for the forest with his wives.

" 'Sṛñjaya, if he died, he who was four times more blessed than you and more meritorious than your son, then you should not grieve for your son.

" 'Sṛñjaya, we have heard of Ambarīṣa, the son of Nābhāga, who died—whom his subjects chose as their meritorious protector, O most excellent of kings. Performing sacrificial worship in a rite he had initiated, he conveyed to the brahmin priests, as their presents, a thousand thousand 95 kings who performed myriads of sacrifices. "No men in ancient times accomplished this, nor will any do it in the future," so did the kings being given as presents applaud Ambarīṣa, the son of Nābhāga. A hundred thousand kings and a hundred hundred kings, all offering sacrificial worship with Horse Sacrifices, went upon the southern course.°

" 'Sṛñjaya, if he died, he who was four times more blessed than you and more meritorious than your son, then you should not grieve for your son.

" 'Sṛñjaya, we have heard of Śaśabindu, the son of Citraratha, who died—the exalted one with a hundred thousand wives and a thousand 100 thousand sons who all wore golden armor and were top bowmen. A hundred girls went along behind each prince, a hundred elephants with each girl, a hundred chariots with each elephant, a hundred native-born horses garlanded with gold with each chariot, a hundred cows with each horse, and the same number of sheep and goats with each cow.‡ The great King Śaśabindu designated the entire amount of this

* The Vedic royal ritual called the Vājapeya.
† = Yayāti's youngest, the dynast from whom Bharata, then Kuru, then Dhṛtarāṣṭra and Pāṇḍu descended; thus these descendents are sometimes called Pauravas in the *MBh*; see *MBh* 1.79.
‡ Śaśabindu's numbers outdid Bhagīratha's; the former's hundred thousand wives had a million sons, followed by a hundred million maidens, followed by ten billion elephants.

wealth without limit to the brahmins in a great performance of a Horse Sacrifice.

"'Sṛñjaya, if he died, he who was four times more blessed than you and more meritorious than your son, then you should not grieve for your son.

"'Sṛñjaya, we have heard of Gaya, the son of Amūrtarayas, who died—for one hundred years that king consumed only the remnants of sacrificial offerings. The God Fire offered to grant his wishes, so Gaya made these wishes: "By your favor, O eater of offerings, my Splendid Richness* shall be inexhaustible even while I give gifts away, my enthusiastic munificence° in Lawful rites shall grow, and my mind shall delight in Truth." We have heard that he obtained all these wishes from Fire. For a thousand years this king of tremendous fiery brilliance performed worship over and over again with the New Moon and Full Moon Sacrifices and with the Seasonal Sacrifices.° Every day upon rising for a thousand years, he gave away a hundred thousand cows and a hundred hundred horses. He refreshed the Gods with Soma, the brahmins with riches, his ancestors with Svadhā oblations, and his wives with whatever they fancied. The king fashioned a courtyard made of gold that was ten *vyāmas*† across and twice as long, and he gave it away as the present for the priests at a great performance of a Draft of Strength Sacrifice. As many grains of sand as the Gaṅgā has, so many cows did Gaya, son of Amūrtarayas, give away.

"'Sṛñjaya, if he died, he who was four times more blessed than you and more meritorious than your son, then you should not grieve for your son.

"'Sṛñjaya, we have heard of Rantideva, the son of Saṅkṛti, who died—he of great fame obtained a boon after propitiating Śakra perfectly. "Let us have much food and numerous guests, but let our munificence never depart, and let us never beg from anyone." The exalted Rantideva was famous for the strictness of his behavior; animals of the village, and forest animals too, approached him of their own accord for his sacrifices.° A great river oozed from the heaps of those animals' hides, and it became known everywhere as the "River of Hides."‡ In his long sacrificial shed the king gave golden *niṣka* coins to the brahmins as presents. And when they complained at his "A *niṣka* for each and every one of you," he won the brahmins over with "A thousand for each of

followed by one trillion chariots, followed by one hundred trillion horses, followed by ten quadrillion cows, followed by one quintillion sheep and goats!

* "Splendid Richness" was supplied by the translator; see endnote.

† A *vyāma* is about a yard in length according to Nīlakaṇṭha.

‡ Carmaṇvatī, the modern Chambal, according to MW; named for *carman*, "skin, hide"

you." At the wise Rantideva's New Moon and Full Moon Sacrifices every month,° none of the implements used to make the offering that is given to the priest, and none of the implements used to prepare its ingredients—jars, plates, pans, bowls, pots—were not made of gold. Any night one stayed° in the house of Rantideva, son of Saṅkṛti, a hundred and twenty thousand cattle were butchered, but still the cooks—wearing earrings of highly polished jewels—complained, "You have to eat mostly sauce, there is not as much meat today as before."

"'Sṛñjaya, if he died, he who was four times more blessed than you and more meritorious than your son, then you should not grieve for your son.

"'Sṛñjaya, we have heard of the exalted Sagara,° a descendant of Ikṣvāku, who died—he was inhumanly ferocious, a tiger among men. Sixty thousand sons trailed behind him when he went about, like clusters of stars around the moon in a clear sky at the end of the rainy season. The whole earth bowed down before him and went under his one parasol, and he refreshed the Gods with a thousand Horse Sacrifices. He granted to suitable brahmins all their wishes high and low, and he gave them a lofty mansion made of gold, with golden pillars, full of women with lotus-petal eyes, and full of couches and beds. At his direction the brahmins shared that wealth. Out of anger he had the earth dug out, and so she became marked with the ocean.° From his name the ocean came to be called *sāgara*.*

"'Sṛñjaya, if he died, he who was four times more blessed than you and more meritorious than your son, then you should not grieve for your son.

"'Sṛñjaya, we have heard of Pṛthu, the son of Vena, who died—whom the great seers acting in concert consecrated as king in the great forest. He is called "Pṛthu" because it was said, "He will expand the worlds."† Tradition teaches that a kṣatriya is a "kṣatriya" because "He saves us from injury."‡ When his subjects saw Pṛthu, the son of Vena, they said, "We love him."§ So his designation "king"‖ arose from their affection# for him. The earth was bountifully productive without plowing, there was honey in each and every tree-hollow, and all the cows gave a full bucket of milk during the son of Vena's rule. People were never sick, they gained all their ends, had no fear of anything, and they stayed in

* His name was Sagara, and *sāgara* can mean "son of Sagara."

† Pṛthu is here derived from the verb root √*prath* in the sentence "*prathayiṣyati vai lokān.*"

‡ From the elements *kṣat* + √*tṛ* in the phrase *kṣatāt nas trāyati.*

§ = *raktāḥ smas*, from the root √*rañj/raj*; another etymology.

‖ = *rājan.*

\# = *anurāgāt*, which is ultimately from the root √*rañj/raj.*

their fields or their houses as they wished. He fixed in place the waters of the ocean,° which were inclined to advance, and he broke the rivers
135 apart;° his flag never failed to fly.° He gave twenty-one mountains of gold, each three *nalas* high,* to the brahmins in a great performance of a Horse Sacrifice.

"'Sṛñjaya, if he died, he who was four times more blessed than you and more meritorious than your son, then you should not grieve for your son.

† "'Why do you keep silent, Sṛñjaya? King, you have not been
listening to what I've been saying. If you are not listening, then
everything I have said so well has just been babbled in vain,
like medicine for someone on the verge of death.'"

Sṛñjaya said:

I have been listening, Nārada, to what you've been telling me
to drive my grief away! What you've been telling me about the
glory of those exalted kings who were seers who performed
those meritorious deeds has been nicely varied in its matter, it
has been like a fragrant garland.

You have not just babbled in vain, great seer. Just having seen
you, Nārada, I am freed of my grief. I want to hear your words,
O speaker of the *brahman;*‡ I have not had enough of you. It is
as if I were drinking nectar.

140 There is always some benefit in just seeing you. O lord, I am
devastated at my son's evil mishap. If you would do me a
kindness, let my dead boy come back to life. By your kind favor
let him rejoin me now.

Nārada said:

I will give you once again the dear departed boy
Svarṇaṣṭhīvin,§ whom the seer Parvata gave to you; he will
have a golden navel and will live a thousand years.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

30.1 How did "Excretor of Gold" become Sṛñjaya's son? Why did Parvata give him to Sṛñjaya? And how did he die? At a time when men lived for a

* About eighteen feet in height; see the glossary.
† The chapter ends with five mixed triṣṭubhs.
‡ = the Vedas.
§ = "Excretor of Gold"; see note.

thousand years, how did Sṛñjaya's son die before he became an adolescent? And I want to know if "Excretor of Gold" was merely Svarṇaṣṭhīvin's name, or was he really an "excretor of gold?"

Vāsudeva said:

I will tell you what happened here, lord of peoples. Nārada and Parvata, the two seers mentioned earlier, are honored throughout the worlds.
5 Once upon a time those two lords (one the maternal uncle, the other his nephew) came down here from the world of the Gods, happily giving up,° while among humans, food that had been purified as sacrificial offerings and the other foods of the Gods. Nārada was the maternal uncle and Parvata was his nephew, Nārada's sister's son. Though the two of them had ascetic power, they traveled on the surface of the earth, and they dashed all about, duly enjoying human pleasures. They were affectionate friends, and once when they were in a gleeful mood they made an agreement: "Any desire either one of us has in his heart, whether good or bad, must be revealed to the other. And if either of us does otherwise and acts falsely, let there be a curse upon him."

After they had agreed to this, those great seers, honored throughout the
10 worlds, came to King Sṛñjaya Śvaitya and said: "We will stay with you for a while for your benefit. Accordingly, make yourself ready for us, king." The king said, "Yes," and welcomed them hospitably. Some time later the king, who was full of affection for that exalted pair that had come to him in this way, said to them, "This fair-complexioned girl is my one and only daughter. She will serve the two of you. The princess Sukumārī* looks like the filament of a lotus—she is lovely, her body is flawless, and she is graced with fine character and good behavior." "That is excellent, good man," said they. The king then ordered his daughter, "Girl, serve these two seers as if they were Gods, as if they were the ancestors." Doing what Law required, the girl said, "Yes," to her father, and she served those two
15 graciously in accordance with the king's command. As she served them in this way, love swiftly and urgently overwhelmed Nārada because of her matchless beauty. The desire in the exalted one's heart grew steadily, like the moon during the bright half of the month. Though aware of his Lawful Obligation, Nārada was ashamed, so he did not confess his intense feeling to his nephew, the exalted Parvata.

But Parvata did become aware of it because of his ascetic power and because there were signs of it. He was enraged at the love-smitten Nārada, and he cursed him harshly. "You, sir, made an agreement with me, and you were fully aware of what you were doing—'Any desire either one of us
20 has in his heart, whether good or bad, must be revealed to the other.' You, sir, have been false to that, so I pronounce this sentence. Since you, sir, did not tell me before now of your desire for the princess Sukumārī, I am

* = "Highly Delicate."

cursing you. Since you, an elder who utters the formulas of the Vedas, a performer of asceticism, and a brahmin, have betrayed the agreement we made between us, I am outraged, and I am cursing you, sir. Now hear this. Sukumārī will certainly become your wife; but from your marriage on, that girl, and others as well, will see you not in your own true form but as a monkey."

25 As soon as Nārada realized what Parvata was saying, the uncle laid his own curse on his nephew out of rage. "You will not live in heaven, even if you are constant in observing Law and possess the merits of asceticism, celibacy, truthfulness, and self-control." After those two enraged and unforgiving seers had cursed each other so harshly, they charged at each other like two raging bull elephants.

The great seer Parvata then wandered over the entire earth, properly honored because of his own brilliance, Bhārata. And Nārada, preeminent in Law, gained Sṛñjaya's faultless daughter Sukumārī in accordance with 30 Law. And in accordance with the curse, the girl saw Nārada as a monkey right after the recitation of the ritual formulas for the marriage. Sukumārī did not then think less of the heavenly seer, whose face resembled a monkey's; she had true affection for him. She served her husband and was lovingly devoted to him. She went to no one else about her husband—not to any God, nor any holy man, nor any Yakṣa, not even in her thoughts.°

Some time later the blessed Parvata happened to come to a deserted forest and saw Nārada there. Parvata greeted Nārada and said to him, 35 "Lord, would you be so kind as to commend me to heaven." Nārada saw that Parvata, his hands folded in humble submission, was sad, but he himself was even more sad, and he said to Parvata, "You cursed me first. Only after you said to me, 'You will be a monkey,' did I curse you as well, to get even,° saying 'From now on you will not live in heaven.' This did not become you, for you were in the position of being my son." Those two sages then each withdrew his curse from the other. Later, when Sukumārī saw Nārada in his full splendor, in his form as a God, she ran away, fearing he was someone else's husband. Parvata saw the woman, who could not be faulted for running off, and he said to her, "This is your husband, do not 40 worry about it. The blessed seer, lord Nārada, is absolutely dedicated to Law. His heart is indivisibly yours, have no doubt of that." The exalted Parvata persuaded her in many different ways, and when she learned of the problem of her husband's curse° she returned to normal. Parvata then went to heaven and Nārada went home.

This great seer Nārada, who witnessed all that was done in this, will tell you of this as it happened, if you ask him, O best of men.

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

31.1 The Pāṇḍava king then said to Nārada, "Blessed one, I want to hear how Svarṇaṣṭhīvin came to be." After the King of Law said this, the sage told him of Svarṇaṣṭhīvin exactly as it had happened. "Great king, it was

just as Keśava* has said. But since you ask, I will tell you the rest of this business.

"I and Parvata, my sister's son, a great sage, went to stay with Sṛñjaya, 5 the best of victorious kings. He honored us with the prescribed rite, and we dwelled there in his house, our every wish provided. After years had gone by, when it was time for us to go, Parvata said to me something pertinent to the moment. 'Brahmin, we have been supremely honored during the time we have stayed here in the palace of this Indra among men. We must consider what is appropriate.' I then said to the good-looking Parvata, 'My fine nephew, this befits you perfectly! The king should be gratified by making a wish. He must get whatever he wants. He shall even gain perfection by our using our ascetic power, if you agree.'

10 "Parvata then summoned the good-looking King Sṛñjaya, and then that bull among sages stated what we had agreed upon. 'We have been gratified, king, by all the kind hospitality you've offered so sincerely. O best of men, as we take leave of you, think of a wish—something that would be agreeable to a man while inoffensive to the Gods—and have it, great king. We regard you to be worthy of our esteem, sir.'"

Sṛñjaya said:

If you feel friendship toward me, then that is enough for me. That is the best thing I could get from you; that is a great reward that has already come to me.

Nārada said:

As the king started to say this again, Parvata answered him, "Choose something, king, some wish that has been lodged in your heart for a long time."

Sṛñjaya said:

15 I do want a son, a resolute man full of heroic energy, who will live long and be fortunate, and have the luster of the king of the Gods.

Parvata said:

Your wish will come to pass, but he will not live long, for the plan in your heart is to conquer the king of the Gods. Svarṇaṣṭhīvin, "Excretor of Gold," he will be, because he will excrete gold. He will have the same luster as the king of the Gods, so you will have to protect him from the king of the Gods.

Nārada said:

When Sṛñjaya heard what the exalted Parvata said, he was pleased, and he said, "It need not be that way. My son could be long-lived if you used your ascetic power, sage." But Parvata said nothing to this because he was 20 leery of Indra. The king was crestfallen, and it was I who spoke next. "Call me to mind in the future, king; when I have been called to your mind I will appear to you. When your dear son has gone under the sway of the king of the dead, I will give him back to you in that form.° Do not grieve, O lord of

* = Kṛṣṇa.

the earth." After I said this to the king, the two of us left as we intended, and Sṛñjaya entered his palace when it suited him.°

After some time went by a son was born to the royal seer Sṛñjaya, a son of great heroic might who seemed to blaze with brilliance. In the course of time he grew, like a great lotus on a pond. He had golden excretions, and that was his name, in accordance with the fact. People came to know of this most amazing of marvels, O best of the Kurus, and then the Indra of the Gods realized that those two exalted ones had granted the king's wish. Afraid of being overthrown by him, the slayer of the demons Bala and Vṛtra,* relying upon the advice of his counselor Bṛhaspati, began to look for an opening against the prince. He charged his divine weapon, his lightning-bolt, which stood before him in bodily form, "Become a tiger and slay this prince. For surely, lightning-bolt, when he has grown to his fullness in manly power this son of Sṛñjaya will overthrow me, since the seer Parvata gave him to Sṛñjaya." After Śakra told him this, the lightning-bolt, the conqueror of enemy cities, followed the prince constantly, looking for an opening.

Now at that time King Sṛñjaya, who was thrilled to have a son who shone with the luster of the king of the Gods, spent all his time in the forest in the company of his harem.° One time the boy, accompanied by his nurse, was skipping along the bank of the Bhāgīrathī,† which was a rushing stream in the forest. The boy, who was tremendously strong and had the ferocity of the mightiest bull elephant, though he was only about five years old, ran right into that tiger° when it sprang out at him all of a sudden. The tiger mauled the trembling boy, and the prince fell lifeless to the earth. His nurse screamed. After killing the prince, the tiger disappeared on the spot; the tiger disappeared through the illusory power of the king of the Gods.

The king heard the nurse crying as if she were in extreme pain, and that lord of the earth himself ran to the spot. He saw the prince lying there dead, saturated in blood, the joy of his life gone—it was as if the moon, the maker of night, had fallen from the sky. Grievously pained, he lifted his blood-soaked son with his mutilated torso onto his lap and wept piteously. And then his mothers, wailing, withered by searing grief, rushed to the spot where King Sṛñjaya was. As the king brooded, he remembered me, and I, realizing he was thinking of me, appeared to him. The king was in the thrall of grief, so I recited to him those words that the prince of the Yadus has recounted to you.‡ Then I brought the boy back to life, with Vāsava's§ permission.

It had to be that way. Nothing could have been otherwise. Later prince

* = Indra.
† = the Gaṅgā River.
‡ The account of the greatness of the sixteen kings which Kṛṣṇa recited in 12.29.
§ = Indra's.

Svarṇaṣṭhīvin was very famous. He was heroically manly, and he pleased the hearts of his father and mother. When his father had gone to heaven, that lord, frighteningly energetic, served as king for one thousand one hundred years. Offering worship with numerous great rites of sacrifice that distributed many rich presents to the priests, the tremendously illustrious king refreshed the Gods and the ancestors. And, after a great stretch of time, having produced many sons extending the lineage of his family, he succumbed, king, to the one who operates through Time.*

O king of kings, you must stop this grief that wells up in you, just as Keśava has told you to do, just as the tremendous ascetic Vyāsa has told you to do. Keep to the kingdom of your father and your grandfather, and lift up the load. If you worship with great holy rites of sacrifice, you will gain the heavenly worlds everyone wants.

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

The grieving King Yudhiṣṭhira kept silent, and the ascetic Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana, who knew the fundamental truth of Law, spoke to him.

"O you with eyes like blue lotuses, the Lawful duty of kings is to protect their subjects. Law is the world's standard. One should follow Law always. Keep to the track of your father and your grandfather, king. Law among the brahmins, as ascertained by them from the Vedas, is permanent. It is the standard of all standards and is everlasting, O bull of the Bharatas. And the kṣatriya is the guardian of the whole of Law. So any man in a kingdom who fights against the king's regime is to be restrained forcibly, for he harms the functioning of the world. Any man in the thrall of error, who would make what is not the standard into the standard, whether he be one's servant, or one's son, or even an ascetic—the king should restrain such wicked men by any means, or have them executed. A king who does otherwise is guilty of doing wrong, for a king who does not save Law when it is being obliterated is a slayer of Law. You have cut down these slayers of Law and their followers. Why do you grieve now, son of Pāṇḍu, when you were only doing what is your proper Law? According to Law a king should kill, make gifts, and protect his subjects."

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

I do not doubt what you say, ascetic, for Law is not beyond the range of your eyes, O you best of those who support all Laws. But for the sake of the kingdom, I occasioned the killing of many who never should have been slain. These sins burn me and roast me, brahmin.

Vyāsa said:

Bhārata, the doer of deeds may be the Lord,° or it may be man. Or maybe chance operates in the world. Or maybe what happens are the consequences produced from one's past deeds, as is taught in tradition.

When men who have been commanded by the Lord° do a good or a bad

* = Death; see the endnote.

deed, the consequences of that deed go to the Lord. For obviously if a man were to chop down a tree in the forest with an axe, the evil would belong just to the man doing the chopping and not at all to the axe.

"But maybe those men do acquire the consequences of those deeds by taking them over from him."°*

No, the evil done through meting out punishment or wielding weapons
15 does not belong to the man who does those things.† It would not be right, son of Kuntī, that one should acquire consequences effected by another. Therefore assign it to the Lord.

Or, it may be that man is the doer of deeds good and evil,‡ and there is nothing more to it than that. So then, do another good deed.°

Now truly, king, no one, anywhere, ever deviates from what has been decreed,§ so the evil done through meting out punishment or wielding weapons does not belong to the man who does those things.

Or, king, if you think the world is based on chance,‖ then there never has been a bad deed, and never will there be one. And furthermore,# people require that good and evil be accounted for,° and what is most accounted for in the world is kings' wielding the rod of punishment.

20 And Bhārata, deeds do come back around in the world,** and men acquire their good and bad consequences; that is what I believe about it.

So the command to do good is right, the consequences of deeds are certain. O tiger among kings, abandon this. Do not let your heart settle into grief. As you have been following your proper Law, Bhārata, even if it has been subject to criticism, abandoning yourself like this is not becoming, king. Expiatory measures have been prescribed here, son of Kuntī, for those who have done deeds. One should perform them while still in possession of his body, for once he is deprived of his body, he shall perish. So, king, you will perform expiation while still alive. If you have not done expiation, you will roast when you die, Bhārata.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

33.1 Sons were killed! And grandsons, and brothers and fathers too! And fathers-in-law, teachers, maternal uncles, and grandfathers! And affinal kinsmen and friends—illustrious kṣatriyas all! And kinsmen of our same age, and brothers, O grandfather,†† and many kings of men gathered from

* That is, from the Lord.

† That is, the evil occasioned by punishment or war does not belong to the men who only carry out the orders of another.

‡ = the second of the four possibilities Vyāsa listed in stanza 11.

§ "Decreed" is often a synonym of "fate"; fate is a regular subtheme of this general theme, but was not listed among Vyāsa's four possibilities in stanza 11.

‖ = the third of Vyāsa's four possibilities.

Vyāsa adds another point rebutting the primacy of chance.

** Regarding the fourth item on his list, Vyāsa affirms his belief in karma as taught by tradition.

†† = Vyāsa.

many different countries. Grandfather, I by myself alone, greedy for the kingdom, caused them all to be killed! What will become of me, ascetic, now that I have killed the likes of these men—kings who were constant in
5 doing Lawful, Meritorious Deeds, who drank Soma repeatedly? I burn constantly now, thinking over and over again about this earth deprived of these lions of princes full of Royal Splendor. Having witnessed this horrible slaughter of kinsmen, having seen enemies slain by the hundreds and other men by the millions, I burn with grief, grandfather.

And now that these excellent women have been deprived of their sons, husbands, and brothers, what will their situation be? They are reviling us Pāṇḍavas, and the Vṛṣṇis too, as horrible dealers of death. Withered by grief and in shock, they are falling to the ground in faints. Never seeing their fathers, brothers, husbands, or sons again, these women will
10 abandon their dear lives and go to the house of Yama because of their tender affection. O most excellent of brahmins, I have no doubt of this. And obviously, because of the subtlety of Law, we shall also be guilty of killing women. Having killed our friends, and having done boundless evil, we shall fall headfirst into hell.

Your excellency, we shall free our selves° by terrible asceticism. Grandfather, tell me about some especially good hermitages.

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

34.1 After listening to what Yudhiṣṭhira said, the seer Dvaipāyana, who had made a shrewd assessment of Yudhiṣṭhira, said to the son of Pāṇḍu, "Do not be depressed, king. Recall the *kṣatra* Law. O bull among kṣatriyas, these kṣatriyas were all killed doing their proper Law. They sought the whole of Royal Splendor and great glory on earth. They were bound to the rule of death, and they went to their end in the course of Time. You were not their killer, nor was Bhīma, nor Arjuna, nor the twins. Time, in its characteristic
5 revolution,° took the life of those men. They were destroyed by Time, Time who has no mother and father, who treats no one kindly, who is the witness of creatures' deeds. This* has merely been the instrument of Time; when it slays beings by means of other beings, that is its form as Lord. Realize that Time has deeds for its bodily form—it is witness to deeds good and bad, and it yields its fruit later in Time, giving rise to pleasant and unpleasant things.

"O strong-armed man, think about the deeds they all did. Now they who acted as agents of destruction have gone under the sway of Time. Consider your own good character, your vows, and your special observances; yet you were made to act and approach such deeds as these
10 by fate. Just as an apparatus fashioned by a carpenter is in the control of the one who holds it, so the universe is driven by action that is yoked to Time. Once you understand that the origination of a man has no special

* = this war.

cause, and that his annihilation occurs at random, then grief and joy are pointless. But now since falsehood snares your mind on this, king, you are therefore commanded: 'Perform expiation now.'°

"Tradition teaches this, son of Pṛthā, in connection with the war of the Gods and the Asuras long ago. The Asuras were the elder brothers, and the Gods were the younger ones. There was great hostility between them over Royal Splendor, and there was a war that lasted thirty-two thousand years, supposedly. The Gods killed the Daityas and took heaven, flooding the earth with blood and turning it into one big ocean. And then brahmins who were masters of the Vedas, once they had acquired the earth, became confused by pride and took to assisting the Dānavas. Called "jackals" throughout the three worlds, there were eighty-eight thousand of them, and they were killed by the Gods, Bhārata. Wicked men who want to do away with Law, who promote what is contrary to Law, should be killed the way the overbearing Daityas were killed by the Gods. If by killing one member of a clan, those remaining would be healthy, or if by killing a clan, the country would be healthy, then doing that is not an offense. Some Right has the appearance of Wrong, king, the wise man must realize that there is Right with the appearance of Wrong. So, settle down. You are an educated man, Pāṇḍava. You are going along a road traveled before by the Gods, Bhārata. Men like this do not go to hell, O Pāṇḍava bull. Cheer your brothers and your friends, scorcher of your enemies.

"When a man's mind is suffused with the idea of an evil undertaking that he is required to perform, and when he is like that* as he performs the deed, and when after he has done it he feels no shame, then it is said 'All of the impurity in that deed is his.' There is no expiation for him, there is no diminution of his bad karma. But you are from a spotless family, you were made to act by the wrongs of others, you did this deed unwillingly, and now you burn with sorrow. The great rite of the Horse Sacrifice is declared to be the expiation. Carry that out, great king, and you will be free of sin. After he had conquered his enemies with the aid of the Maruts, Maghavan,† who had punished the Daitya Pāka with death, carried out a hundred rites one by one and became "The God of a hundred rites."‡ Then Śakra, cleansed of his evil, having conquered heaven, having arrived in the heavenly worlds that give rise to happiness, and surrounded by his bands of Maruts, shone radiantly, illuminating the quarters of the sky. The seers and the Gods sat in attendance around the lord of Śacī, the lord of the Gods, as he rejoiced in heaven with the Apsarases.

"And now you, here in this world, by means of your valor, have come into union with the earth. The lords of the earth were defeated by you

* That is, when he has that same evil cast of mind.
† = Indra.
‡ = Śatakratu, a name of Indra.

through your valor, blameless one. Go to their cities and their countries surrounded by your allies and have their brothers and sons and grandsons blessed as kings in each his own realm. Do soothing things even for babies still in the womb, make all the people who underlie your rule° happy. Watch over the earth. Have princesses blessed as rulers in places where there is no prince. In this way the class of women, the repository of love, will forget its grief. After offering encouragement like this in all regions, Bhārata, perform ritual worship with the Horse Sacrifice, as the victorious Indra did in the past. Those illustrious kṣatriyas should not be mourned, O bull among kṣatriyas. Confused by the army of Death,° they were destroyed by their own deeds. Observing the *kṣatra* Law, you have gained a kingly rule that is free of sin; perform your Law, son of Kuntī, and what you experience after death will be better."

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

What are the deeds that require expiation? What does a man do to get free? Tell me, grandfather.

Vyāsa said:

A man must perform expiation when he fails to do an act that has been prescribed, when he performs forbidden acts, and when he acts wrongly.

A Vedic student who is asleep when the sun rises, one who is already asleep when the sun sets, someone who has bad nails, or browned teeth, one whose younger brother has married before him, one who has married before his older brother, one who neglects the Vedas, one who is censorious, one who marries an old maid,° and a man whose first wife is a woman previously married, one who has ejaculated semen in violation of his vows, one who has slain a brahmin, one who has handed the Veda over to an unworthy recipient, one who has failed to teach the Veda to a worthy recipient, one who offers rites indiscriminately for all in the village, one who, son of Kuntī, sells "The King,"* one who has slain a śūdra or a woman—each earlier one is more blameworthy than the following°—one who slays a beast without a serious reason, one who starts a forest fire, one who serves a teacher with deceit, one who opposes his teacher, one who neglects his ritual fires, and one who sells the knowledge of the Veda, and one who violates an agreement: These are all sins.

Pay attention. I will declare the things one should not do, things that are opposed to usage or the Vedas. Concentrate and listen. Abandoning one's proper Law, doing another's Law, officiating at a sacrificial rite of worship for someone not qualified to perform those rites, eating something that should not be eaten, abandoning a person who has come to one for refuge, not supporting a dependent, the selling of potions, and the killing of animals. And, Bhārata, when someone, though fully able, does not do such rites as setting up the ritual fires and so on, or when someone does

* = Soma; see endnote.

not offer all those presents which are to be given regularly, or does not make the presents to the brahmins at the conclusion of a rite, or makes bodily contact in the midst of brahmins: The men who know Law say that all of these things are wrongful.

A son who alienates himself from his father is a reprehensible man, as is someone who violates the bed of his teacher, as is he who Wrongly fails to
15 beget offspring. These actions have been listed briefly and at length, both. The man who does these things, or fails to do their opposites, must perform expiation.

Now when these deeds are done, for whatever reasons, they do not taint the men doing them. Hear this! If a man kills in war a brahmin master of the Veda who has picked up a weapon and attacks him and tries to kill him, he is not thereby a brahmin-slayer.° Moreover, son of Kuntī, there is a formula that is recited in the Vedas on this; I declare this Rule to you as it is enjoined by the authority of the Veda.

> "Should one kill a brahmin who has fallen away from his proper livelihood and is trying to kill him, he would not thereby become a brahmin-slayer—one's own rage simply meets the other's rage."

20 Likewise, when someone behaves that way out of ignorance, even one who drinks liquor, and then freely and without compulsion becomes dedicated to Law once again, he requires the sacramental purification of initiation once again.

All this that has been listed for you, son of Kuntī, and the eating of what should not be eaten, is all cleansed through the rule of expiation. Indeed, one should not blame a man who goes to his teacher's bed for the sake of his teacher: Uddālaka had Śvetaketu fathered by one of his pupils.° And one who steals for the sake of his teacher in times of extreme need is not bound fast by the deed,° if he does not take much, does not take anything to gratify his own wishes, and does not make his living by it.° If one takes from anyone besides brahmins, he commits no wrong; if he himself does
25 not consume it, he is not stained with an evil deed. A lie may be spoken° to protect one's own or another's life; and for the sake of one's teacher, and to women, and in negotiating marriages. One's vow is not broken upon the release of semen during one's sleep; an offering of butter into a blazing fire is the expiation prescribed. There is no wrong in marrying when one's older unmarried brother has fallen,* or left home. Intercourse with another's wife does not spoil one's Merit when one has been solicited to do it. One should not slay a beast without a serious reason, or cause another to do so; the sacramental rite commanded by the Vedic prescriptions is a

* = fallen down in socially recognized moral status because of wrongdoing.

kindness to beasts. Unwittingly giving something to an unworthy brahmin is not sinful; likewise the failure to give° to a worthy recipient when it is caused by factors beyond one's control, or giving to an unworthy one
30 when it is caused by factors beyond one's control. Making a wicked woman atone° is not sinful; she is cleansed by it, and her husband is not defiled. Now the selling of Soma is not sinful if one fully understands the essence of it.° There is nothing wrong with discharging a servant who is not capable. A forest fire that is set for the sake of cattle* is not wrong.

One does no wrong when he does these things I have mentioned. I will now declare expiations at length, Bhārata.

Vyāsa said:

36.1 Bhārata, a man purifies evil by asceticism, by rites, and by gifts, if after he is purified he does not continue doing evil.

Eating once a day, begging his food, still performing his proper duties, carrying a skull in his hand, carrying a bed-post for a staff, remaining celibate, keeping always busy, being free of resentment, sleeping on the ground, always proclaiming his crime to the world—after twelve full years like this a brahmin-slayer is free. By eating in "the austere way"° for six years, a brahmin-slayer is purified. By eating only "moon by moon," he is
5 freed in three years. By eating only once a month he is purified in one year, no doubt of it. And similarly, king, by ceasing to eat he is free in just a short time.

One is purified by the ritual of the Horse Sacrifice, no doubt of it. "Any men like this who take its concluding bath are all purified of their evil deeds," so says an ancient text of the Veda.

One who is slain in battle for the sake of a brahmin is freed of brahmin-slaying. A brahmin-slayer who has a hundred thousand head of cattle transferred to suitable recipients is freed from all his evil deeds. He who
10 gives twenty-five thousand brown milk-cows is freed from all his evil deeds. He who, when he is about to die, gives a thousand milk-cows with calves to pious observers of Law who are poor is freed of his sins. He who presents a hundred horses from Kamboja to brahmins observant of the various practices of restraint,° O protector of the earth, is freed from his sins. Bhārata, he who might grant just one man something he wishes for, and who then avoids having himself praised for having given it, is freed from his sins.

A brahmin who has drunk liquor once should drink that liquor when it is hot as fire and so make himself pure in this world and the next.† Plunging off a cliff of Mount Meru, entering into a fire, or setting out on the
15 Great Journey,° he is freed from all his sins. "A brahmin who has drunk

* That is, to clear land for pasturage.
† A form of capital punishment.

liquor may associate with brahmins again by offering sacrificial worship with the 'Soma libation of Bṛhaspati' ";° so says a teaching of the *brahman.** If a man who has drunk liquor makes a gift of land, being sincere and without self interest, he is transformed and becomes pure if he does not drink it again.

One who has violated his teacher's bed should lie down upon a heated slab of metal; or he should walk about with his penis in his hand and with his eyes lifted upwards. By giving up his body he becomes free of his evil deed. Women who exert themselves° for a year become free of their bad deeds. He who performs a great vow, or who gives away everything he owns, or who is slain in battle for the sake of his teacher becomes free of his evil deed. One who attends a teacher deceitfully, or who opposes his teacher, gets free of that evil deed by offering him a nice present. When someone has ejaculated semen in violation of his vows, he may perform the expiatory observance set for a brahmin-slayer; likewise, he would become free of his sin by wearing a donkey-hide for six months. One who robs a man of his wife, or robs his wealth, becomes free of his sin by observing the vow for a year.° And then he should give him whom he has robbed equal wealth; in this complex way he becomes free of his sin. He who marries before his older brother, and the older unmarried brother whose younger brother has already married, are both purified, Bhārata, by the strict observance of austerities for twelve nights, or for ten at least; but he who would save his ancestors should then always get married;° there would be no fault on the part of his wife, and she would not be tainted with this. After she has given birth,° it is ordained that a woman is purified by her menstrual discharge in four months time—"This is how women are purified"; so say those who know Law. When women are suspected of evil acts, they are purified by their menstrual discharge, as dirty dishes are with ashes—for they may not be approached for sex when the husband knows of wrong.

The entire four-footed Law is ordained for brahmins, and likewise that Law reduced by a quarter is ordained for kṣatriyas; the same is ordained for vaiśyas and śūdras, quarter by quarter. In this way one may determine the seriousness or triviality of their offenses and expiations.

If one has slain an animal, or chopped down trees, or cut down any of many other kinds of plants, he should eat nothing but the wind for three nights, and he should make his offense known publicly. When a man has sex with a woman he should stay away from, there is an expiation prescribed: He should spend six months sleeping upon ashes in wet clothes.

Now this is the rule for all wrongs, along with the rules stated in the

* This teaching tempers the capital punishment and prescribed forms of suicide just enjoined.

Brāhmaṇa texts of the Vedas, together with their rationales, traditional texts, and illustrations. A man gets free of all his sins by reciting the Sāvitrī formula° in a clean place while limiting his intake of food, avoiding injuring other creatures, staying alert, not talking idly. During the day he should always stand; during the night he should sleep out in the open. He should go into the water with his clothes on three times every day and three times every night. One who has undertaken this vow should not speak to women, śūdras, nor those fallen from their status because of bad conduct. Performing this vow, a brahmin will discharge any evil deeds he did unwittingly.

Upon death, he who is the observer amidst the elements* gets the consequences of the good and bad deeds—the doer of the deeds receives the fruit of whatever part of those two quantities remains in excess of the other. So, if he has done bad things, he makes the good fruit grow—by giving gifts, performing asceticism, and performing rites—so he may have that as the remaining excess. He should perform good deeds in situations where bad deeds have been done; he should give away riches regularly to be free of his sins.

The expiation which is assigned conforms to the evil done. Expiation has been ordained except when there has been one of the great sins.°

King, with regard to what should be eaten and not eaten, and to what should be said and not said, they recognize prescriptions for intentional and unintentional violators. Everything one does intentionally is serious, but when the fault was committed unintentionally, was just a blunder, then expiation is prescribed. Evil can be removed by the ordinance of expiation that has been declared, but this ordinance is ordained for one who is a believer and an unstinting supporter. This ordinance is never observed among the stingy Naysayers—the main thing about them is their fault of hypocrisy. O tiger among men, very best of the supporters of Law, whoever wants to be happy in this world or after death should carefully heed the Law that is taught and also the behavior of the men who have been properly taught.

You will get free of the evil you incurred, king, because of the motive you had prior to acting—either you acted to effect a rescue by killing these men, or you did it because it was the duty of kings. You feel horror now, right? So you shall perform expiation. You certainly will not go to your ruin for having done the deeds that are typical of ignoble men.

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

After the blessed one had said this to the King of Law, Yudhiṣṭhira thought for a moment and then answered that ascetic. "What may be eaten? What should not be eaten? What is regarded as a good thing to give

* That is, the soul.

as a gift? Who is a worthy recipient and who an unworthy recipient? Tell me this, grandfather."

Vyāsa said:

On this they recite the ancient account of a conversation between the Progenitor Manu and some Siddhas. Once, in the first period of time, some Siddhas dedicated to ascetic observances met that Lord, and they questioned the Progenitor about Law while he was seated. "How should we eat food? How should we make gifts? How should we recite sacred texts? And how should we perform asceticism? O Progenitor, tell us everything we should do and not do." After they addressed him this way, the blessed Manu, the offspring of the Self-Existent Being, said, "Learn Law as it is; hear it at length and hear it in brief.

"Not taking what has not been given, making gifts, the recitation of texts, asceticism, not injuring others, truthfulness, having no anger, forbearance, worshiping the Gods with sacrifices—this is a specification of Law.

"But what is Lawful and Meritorious may be Unlawful* when it is applied at the wrong time or in the wrong place; and tradition teaches that stealing, lying, and doing injury to others are Lawful in some specific circumstances.°

"What is Lawful and what is Unlawful are both understood to be twofold: There is the distinction between the omission and commission of ordinary acts and Vedic acts.° From omitting the performance of one's proper Lawful Duty there can come immortality;† mortality is the consequence of action. One should understand that bad things are the result of bad actions, and good things are the result of good actions. And the good or bad results of these two‡ would come from the goodness or badness of the actions, whether those results be heaven or something leading to heaven,§° or life or death.‖

"There may be a good result from bad actions that were done without forethought; or from bad actions that were done with some doubt in mind; or the purpose may have been fully intended. Expiation is ordained for doing something without forethought:

> "'Torment of body or mind from pleasant or unpleasant deeds effected through anger or error are quelled with medicines, ritual formulas, expiations accompanied by rationales, traditional texts, and illustrations.'

* = *adharma*. † = renunciation, *nivṛtti*.
‡ = the omitted or committed ordinary or Vedic deeds.
§ In the case of Vedic actions.
‖ In the case of ordinary actions.

"One should exclude completely all the laws° of particular ethnic groups, guilds, locales, and families, for* these are not really Laws since there is no Merit in them.°

"When there arises some doubt as to whether something is Law, then if either ten men who know the Vedas and the learned treatises or three reciters of the text of the Laws say, 'It should be done,' that is Law.

"Brahmins should not eat red clay, red ants, the fruit of the 'mucus-tree,'† nor poison. Brahmins should not eat fish that have no scales, nor frogs, nor any four-footed water creatures except the tortoise. Nor buzzards,° geese, eagles, *cakravākas*,‡ herons,° ducks, storks,° cormorants, vultures, crows, and owls. No carrion-eating birds, or four-footed animals that have tusks—neither those with fangs nor any of those with four tusks. A brahmin should not drink the milk of wild goats, horses, donkeys, camels, nor even of cows, if they have calved recently; nor of human women, nor forest animals.

"No food of a deceased person may be eaten, and no food at all from a woman who has given birth in the past ten days may be eaten; nor may the milk of a cow that is not past the ten-day period of impurity§ be drunk. Food from carpenters, from those who remove animals' hides, from harlots, from washermen, from physicians, and from watchmen should not be eaten; nor from those ostracized from a village or an association, from a woman who lives as an actress, from unmarried men whose younger brothers are married, from eunuchs, from heralds who sing the praises of warriors, nor from gamblers. Food taken from a prisoner, food that has spoiled, that which has gone stale, that which has become like liquor, that which remains of someone's serving, and that which is left over from the meal should not be eaten. No preparations made of flour, meat, sugarcane, vegetables, milk, coarsely ground barley, grains, or coarsely ground oats that have sat for a long time and are altered should be consumed. Dishes boiled in sweet milk, spiced grain dishes, meat, and breads that have been made just for pleasure‖ should not be consumed. These are not to be eaten by brahmin householders who worship with the household Vedic rites.

"The householder should eat only after he has paid homage to the Gods, his ancestors, other humans, seers, and the household deities. As the mendicant renouncer has journeyed forth from his home, so the householder should dwell in his own house. He will acquire Merit if he behaves this way and lives with a devoted wife.

* Text note: See the first endnote at 37.14.
† = *śleṣmātaka*, *Cordia obliqua*, which has a smooth, yellow, plumlike fruit "full of glutinous pulp"; see endnote at 37.16.
‡ = ruddy sheldrakes, that is, the strikingly colored brahminy duck, *Casarca ferringinea*.
§ The ten days after calving.
‖ That is, that have not been prepared as part of a sacrificial ritual.

"He should not give gifts to gain glory, nor from fear, nor as a favor to the recipients; and the man acting for Merit does not make gifts to those who live by dancing or singing, nor to clowns; nor to a drunk, nor to a crazy man, nor to a thief, nor to a physician, nor to one who cannot speak, nor to one whose skin is discolored, nor to one who is missing a limb, nor to a dwarf, nor to a villain, nor to one coming from a bad family, nor to one who has not been blessed by the sacramental rites.* Dead is the gift given to a brahmin who is not learned in the Vedas, who does not speak forth *brahman.* When a gift is not given correctly, or when the receiving of a gift is not correct, it will work to the detriment of the donor and the recipient both.

"As a man crossing the ocean by holding on to a *khadira*° branch or a rock just sinks and sinks, so does the gift-giver who is also a gift-taker. As a fire laid with wet wood does not blaze up brightly, neither does a gift-taker who has not performed asceticism, daily Veda-recitations, and good deeds. As with water in a skull, or milk in a dog-bladder, the problem is the receptacle; so it is with anything donated to a man who does not live by the proper way of life—so it is taught.

"But someone who does not recite the Vedas, who undertakes no vows, who does not know any learned traditions may be a man who harbors no resentments.° Gifts should be given to wretched people out of pity. But gifts should not be made out of pity to a man who behaves offensively, not even if he is wretchedly miserable.

"Anything given to a brahmin estranged from Law with the notion 'That is how worthy people behave,' or again, 'What he does is Law,' would be ineffective, because the receiver is faulty; I have no doubt of this. A brahmin who does not recite the Vedas every day is like an elephant made of wood, or a deer fashioned from leather—all three of them are what they are called in name only. As a eunuch will produce no result with a woman, or as a cow will produce no result with another cow, or as a bird would be without wings, so is a brahmin who does not recite the Vedas. Like a village granary that is empty, like a well that has no water, like an offering that is poured somewhere other than the fire, so would be a gift to a brahmin who neglects Vedic observances. That fool is an enemy who destroys the offerings made to the Gods and those to the ancestors; he merely takes wealth and does not deserve to reach the heavenly worlds."

All of this has been related to you, Yudhiṣṭhira, as it truly is. O bull of the Bharatas, this is a large matter that had to be learned in brief form.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

38.1 Great sage, blessed one, most excellent of brahmins, I wish to hear at length all the Laws for kings and all the Laws of the system of the four Orders of society, and how a king determines policy during times of distress.

* = the various life-cycle rituals of name-giving, first-feeding, and so forth.

How can I conquer the earth while adhering to the Lawful path? This account of expiations, supplemented with this listing of what may and may not be eaten, answers my interests exactly and cheers me a little. Doing what is Lawful and ruling as a king are constantly in opposition—I think about this all the time, and yet this opposition baffles me.

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

The most excellent of those who know the Vedas, Vyāsa of tremendous brilliance, who knows everything that is ancient, glanced at Nārada and said to Yudhiṣṭhira, "Strong-armed Yudhiṣṭhira, if you wish to hear the Laws in their entirety, approach Bhīṣma, the old grandfather of the Kurus. The son of the Bhāgīrathī,* who knows all things, who knows all Laws, will cut through all the doubts that are in your mind on all matters that are obscure. He whom the Goddess, the heavenly river of the three courses,° bore; he who has seen with his own eyes all the Gods from Indra on down; that lord who on various occasions gratified the divine seers with his service, starting with Bṛhaspati, and thus studied kingly administration with him;† that best of the Kurus who acquired the whole body of learning which Uśanas,‡ the brahmin teacher of the Gods and the Asuras, knew, along with its commentaries; the highly intelligent Bhīṣma, who acquired the Vedas supplemented with their auxiliary sciences from the Bhārgava Cyavana and from Vasiṣṭha of strict vows; who long ago waited upon Sanatkumāra of blazing brilliance, the eldest son of the Grandfather§ and one who knows the basic reality and functioning of the inner spirit;° who learned the entire Law for ascetics from Mārkaṇḍeya and acquired special missile weapons‖ from Rāma# and Śakra;** who, having been born among the humans, has his death by his own desire, and who, we have heard, will gain blessed heavenly worlds even though he has no offspring; who always has holy seers of the *brahman* as his councilors; to whom nothing at all that is known or might be known is unknown—that one who knows the Laws, who knows the basic truth of the subtle issues of Law, will declare this to you. Go to him before that knower of the Laws gives up the breath of life."

The very illustrious son of Kuntī of far-seeing wisdom replied to that most excellent of speakers, Vyāsa, son of Satyavatī. "Having carried out this tremendous, hair-raising slaughter of my kinsmen, I am the most sinful of all men. I have been the agent of the earth's destruction. On what

* = the Gaṅgā River. † That is, with Bṛhaspati.
‡ = a brahmin who became the house-priest of the Asuras; thus a counterpart of Bṛhaspati, priest of the Gods. He is also known as Śukra; additionally, he is called Kāvya Uśanas, for he was the the son of Kavi; and because he was thus a grandson of Bhṛgu, Uśanas is also a "Bhārgava."
§ = Brahmā.
‖ = *astra-s*, that is, mantras for supercharging projectiles, mainly arrows.
\# the Bhārgava Rāma, son of Jamadagni
** = Indra.

grounds could I be deemed worthy of questioning that straight-ahead warrior, after I had him deviously assaulted in the war?"

20 Then the illustrious, strong-armed leader of the Yadus* spoke again to that most excellent of kings, because he desired the welfare of the System of the Four Orders. "You really should not be obsessed with grief right now! Best of kings, do what the blessed Vyāsa has just said! O strong-armed great king, the brahmins, and your mighty brothers wait upon you expectantly, the way those afflicted by summer's heat await Parjanya,° the God of rain. And the kings who escaped being killed, and the whole assembly of the four Orders, and your country, the Country of Kuru, do too. Do it in order to please these exalted brahmins, and do it because your 25 teacher, Vyāsa of immeasurable brilliance, has commanded it. Do a favor for your friends, starting with us,† and for Draupadī. You who have slain your enemies, do what is good for the world!"

After Kṛṣṇa said this to him, the king, his eyes like blue lotuses, still feeling great pain, stood up for the well-being of all the world. That tiger of a man had been persuaded by Viṣṭaraśravas‡ himself, and by Dvaipāyana and Devasthāna, and Jiṣṇu.§ Persuaded by these and many others, the magnanimous Yudhiṣṭhira let go of his spiritual pain and torment. He who had delighted Pāṇḍu at his birth, who had spoken great learning, that treasure of learning, that expert in learning and what is worth teaching, made his resolve and came to peace of mind.

30 Surrounded by the others like the moon amidst the stars,° the king put Dhṛtarāṣṭra in the van and entered the city, his own city.

When he decided to enter the city, Yudhiṣṭhira son of Kuntī worshiped the Gods and then thousands of brahmins. Then his advisors worshiped him, and as the great seers praised him, he mounted a shining new chariot that was outfitted with woolen cloth and black antelope skins, and which was yoked to sixteen white, auspiciously marked cattle. It was as if the Moon were mounting his chariot made of the immortal nectar.° The frightfully violent son of Kuntī, Bhīma, took the reins, and Arjuna held the 35 radiant white parasol. The white parasol held over his head was like a white cloud in the sky; it shone like the king of the stars.‖ Then those two heroes the sons of Mādrī took up ornamented yak-tail fans that shimmered like the rays of the moon. All of them splendidly ornamented, the five brothers got on the chariot, and it seemed, king, as though the five elements had been massed together there.

Yuyutsu followed after the eldest Pāṇḍava in another brilliant chariot drawn by swift horses. Kṛṣṇa followed the Kurus together with Sātyaki in a

* = Kṛṣṇa.
† = the Yādava-Vṛṣṇis; "friends" in such contexts = allies.
‡ = "Widely Famous," (i.e., Kṛṣṇa, Viṣṇu).
§ = Arjuna.
‖ = the moon; see endnote at 38.35.

40 brilliant chariot of gold drawn by Sainya and Sugrīva. But, Bhārata,* the eldest father† of the son of Pṛthā, the King of Law, went with Gāndhārī on a palanquin carried by men. All the Kuru women and Kuntī and Kṛṣṇā Draupadī went behind Vidura on various vehicles splendid and humble. Then numerous chariot-warriors, warriors mounted on decorated elephants, foot-soldiers, and cavalry went along behind them. Being praised along the way by his well-spoken bards and poets—*vaitālikas, sūtas, māgadhas*—the strong-armed king went to the City of the Elephant‡ in a procession that was without precedent upon the earth. Then the teeming throng of people full of joy let loose.

45 Upon the son of Pṛthā's approach, the men of the town fittingly decorated the city and the King's Way. The King's Way was lined with strings of white flowers and welcoming banners,° and it was perfumed with burning incense. The royal palace was graced with garlands of different kinds of flowers, *priyaṅgu* vines, and fragrant powders. New water-tight pots full of water were positioned at the city gate, and charming girls and goats were stationed here and there. As they hailed him with sweet words of praise, the son of Pāṇḍu, surrounded by his friends, entered the city through that well-decorated gate.

12(84d) Yudhiṣṭhira the King in Hāstinapura

12.39–44 (B. 38–44; C. 1393–1531)
39 (38–39; 1393). Hāstinapura enthusiastically welcomes the Pāṇḍavas (1–10). The brahmins bless Yudhiṣṭhira, and he enters the palace and worships the Gods. Yudhiṣṭhira honors the brahmins, giving them many valuable gifts. The brahmins pronounce more blessings upon him, and the hum and buzz of Vedic sounds grows to a roar amidst a din of drums and horns proclaiming the victory (10–20). Then a friend of Duryodhana, a Rākṣasa goblin named Cārvāka, who is disguised as one of those brahmins and claims to be speaking for them, charges that Yudhiṣṭhira should suffer curses for slaughtering his kinsmen. He criticizes Yudhiṣṭhira's assumption of kingship and tells Yudhiṣṭhira he should prefer death to life. The brahmins are enraged; they disavow these sentiments and kill Cārvāka by chanting the

* = Janamejaya. † = Dhṛtarāṣṭra.
‡ = Nāgasāhvaya, that is, Hāstinapura.

Vedic syllable huṃ *(20–35). Vāsudeva then explains to Yudhiṣṭhira that he himself always worships brahmins. He goes on to relate that Brahmā had arranged Cārvāka's death in this manner because that one had previously harassed the Gods. He encourages Yudhiṣṭhira to maintain his resolve (35–45).*

40 (40; 1443). Yudhiṣṭhira's grief leaves him, and he sits down upon a golden throne and the other notables sit down around him. The many objects required for a king's installation are brought up, and at Kṛṣṇa's behest Yudhiṣṭhira's priest Dhaumya carries out the Vedic offerings for a king's installation. Dhaumya pours the waters of royal consecration over Yudhiṣṭhira's head (1–15). Yudhiṣṭhira honors the brahmins with gifts of gold coins, and they pronounce benedictions upon him and his brothers (15–20).

41 (41; 1467). Yudhiṣṭhira pledges himself to honor and obey Dhṛtarāṣṭra as before, and he bids everyone else to do the same (1–5). He then appoints Bhīma to be the heir apparent and makes various other royal appointments (5–15).

42 (42; 1486). Yudhiṣṭhira and Dhṛtarāṣṭra perform the first-month memorial offerings for those slain in the war (1–5). Having fulfilled all his responsibilities, Yudhiṣṭhira kindly extends protection to all of his subjects, particularly the widows and the needy (5–10).

43 (43; 1499). Yudhiṣṭhira adores Kṛṣṇa, praising him with about one hundred different names, epithets, or descriptions of excellent qualities (1–15). Kṛṣṇa is gratified and congratulates Yudhiṣṭhira in turn (15).

44 (44; 1516). Yudhiṣṭhira, with Dhṛtarāṣṭra's permission, assigns Duryodhana's opulent palace to Bhīma, Duḥśāsana's to Arjuna, Durmarṣaṇa's to Nakula, and Durmukha's to Sahadeva (1–10). Everyone then retires to his own dwelling for a happy and comfortable night; Kṛṣṇa and Sātyaki go along to Arjuna's (15).

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

39.1 When the sons of Pṛthā made their entrance, thousands upon thousands of the city's people gathered, eager to see them. The King's Way, with its splendidly decorated square, shone brilliantly, the way the vast swelling ocean does when the moon rises. The great bejeweled mansions upon the King's Way were overflowing with women and seemed to sway with the weight. They praised Yudhiṣṭhira shyly and quietly, and Bhīmasena and Arjuna as well, and Mādrī's two sons, the Pāṇḍava twins.

5 "You are fortunate, good woman, princess of Pāñcāla,* since you wait upon the very best of men, as Gautamī waits upon the great seers. You have lived out your vows and your efforts have not been vain, splendid woman." So did those women praise Kṛṣṇā, great king.† Bhārata, the city buzzed with their praises, their chatter, their words of affection.

In due course Yudhiṣṭhira passed on from the King's Way and approached the royal palace that had been decorated and now shone resplendently. The king's subjects, from the town and the country alike, 10 came up to him from this side and that and said things sweet to his ears. "O king of kings, crusher of your enemies, fortunately you are victorious over your enemies! Fortunately you have regained the kingdom with Lawful Deeds and Might. Great king, be our king here for a hundred years. Protect your subjects with your Meritorious, Lawful Deeds, as Indra does heaven." Honored in this way at the palace gate by their good wishes, he received benedictions uttered by brahmins on every side. Having entered the palace—the like of the palace of the king of the Gods—and having listened to everything having to do with the victory, he descended from the chariot.

Yudhiṣṭhira went within and approached the Gods with splendid riches.° He worshiped them all with jewels, fragrances, and garlands 15 of flowers. The king then stepped out, possessed once again of Royal Splendor and great glory, and he gazed upon the handsome brahmins who awaited him. He was then surrounded by brahmins eager to pronounce benedictions upon him, and spotless he shone there radiantly, like the moon amid the multitude of stars. Then, after first honoring his house-priest, Dhaumya, and his eldest father, the son of Kuntī honored those brahmins in the prescribed way with flowers and sweets, with jewels and much gold, and with cattle, clothing, and various other things they valued. Then, Bhārata, the sounds of their wishing the king an auspicious day grew to a roar and almost reached the sky. Those blessed sounds brought 20 joy to the king's friends and were sweet in their ears. As those brahmins learned in the Vedas were bubbling with resonant sounds like honking geese, the Goddess Bhāratī,‡ teeming with syllables, words, and the things expressed by words, was heard in their midst. Then the pleasing sounds of kettledrums and conch-shell horns proclaiming the victory were heard.

When the brahmins stood silent once again, Cārvāka,° a Rākṣasa disguised as a brahmin, spoke to the king. He was a friend of Duryodhana's, bold and fearless, dressed like a mendicant Sāṃkhya, wearing a topknot and carrying a triple staff. Surrounded by those brahmins all eager to wish Yudhiṣṭhira well, and by thousands of others steeped in the practice of 25 special vows and asceticism, that wicked man, without asking leave of

* = Draupadī.
† = Janamejaya.
‡ = Sarasvatī, the Goddess of brahmin wisdom.

those brahmins, spoke to the king, wishing evil on the exalted Pāṇḍava. "All these brahmins have entrusted me to speak for them, and they say, 'Curses upon you, sir, a wicked king who slaughtered his own kin! What good can there be in your ruling the kingdom, son of Kuntī, since you have completely erased your own kinsmen? And once you had caused the killing of your elders, death would have been better for you than surviving.'"

When they heard what this dreadful Rākṣasa said, the brahmins felt insulted; they were upset and they howled. All those brahmins and king Yudhiṣṭhira were embarrassed and extremely perturbed. Then, lord,* they all fell silent.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

30 My good men, be pleased with me as I bow before you in humble entreaty. Please do not curse me; I have just recovered from a disaster.

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

Then every one of those brahmins said, "This is not what we say! Royal Splendor be yours, prince." Those exalted brahmins learned in the Vedas and cleansed through their asceticism then recognized that one by using their eye of knowledge.

The brahmins said:

This man is a friend of Duryodhana's. He is a Rākṣasa called Cārvāka, trying to keep himself safe by disguising himself as a wandering mendicant.° O you who are devoted to Law, we do not say this. Dismiss that worry altogether. Let good fortune wait upon you and your brothers, sir.

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

35 Then all those pure brahmins were insensate with rage as they repudiated that wicked Rākṣasa, and they killed him by chanting "*huṃ*." He fell, completely incinerated by the blazing brilliance of those who give utterance to the *brahman*,† like a tree with all its shoots incinerated by a bolt of Great Indra's lightning.

The brahmins were honored and then they left after congratulating the king. The Pāṇḍava king and his friends were overjoyed.

Vāsudeva said:

Son, I always worship the brahmins in this world. They are Gods moving upon the earth. There is poison in their speech, but they are easy to please. Earlier, son, in the Kṛta Age, there was a Rākṣasa called Cārvāka. O strong-armed one, he performed asceticism for many years at Badarī.°

40 Brahmā repeatedly offered him whatever he might wish, and he chose to be safe from all beings. The lord of the universe granted him that unsurpassable wish. He granted him immunity from all beings, except in the instance of his showing contempt toward brahmins. But after the wicked one received that wish, that mighty Rākṣasa of fierce deeds and boundless aggressiveness roasted the Gods. The Gods then gathered

* = Janamejaya. † = the Vedas.

together and said to Brahmā: "We are oppressed by this Rākṣasa's power, we are for killing him." The immutable God told them, "I have ordained

45 that he will die soon. A king named Duryodhana will be his friend. Bound to Duryodhana by affection, he will insult brahmins. Affronted by his insult, furious brahmins will burn this wicked one up with the power of their speech and he will perish." O bull of the Bharatas, that very Rākṣasa Cārvāka lies here, struck down by the punishing rod of the *brahman*.°

Do not grieve, most excellent of kings. Your kinsmen were slain according to the Law of the *kṣatra*. Those exalted heroes, those kṣatriya bulls, have gone to heaven. Now you, unfallen one, attend to your good fortune! Do not be feeble! Slay your enemies, guard your subjects, protect brahmins.

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

40.1 Then the king's affliction and fever left him. The joyous son of Kuntī sat on a splendid golden throne and faced the east. The two enemy-tamers Sātyaki and Vāsudeva sat on thrones draped with precious carpets,° and they faced the king. Putting the king between them, the exalted Bhīma and Arjuna sat down on two smooth, jewel-studded thrones. Pṛthā sat with Sahadeva and Nakula upon a brilliant ivory couch adorned with

5 gold. Sudharman,° Vidura, Dhaumya, and Dhṛtarāṣṭra Kaurava sat on individual thrones that all looked like fires, and Yuyutsu, Saṃjaya, and the glorious Gāndhārī all sat where king Dhṛtarāṣṭra sat.

Seated there, the king, ever mindful of Law, touched white flowers, good luck charms, unbroken kernels of grain, the earth, gold, silver, and gemstones. Then all the king's subjects, led by his house-priest, came and took sight of the King of Law, bringing many auspicious things with them: Things of clay and gold and diverse jewels—the entire store of objects

10 required for a king's installation was assembled. There were pots full of water—pots of gold, copper,° silver, and clay—flowers, puffed rice, bundles of holy *kuśa* grass, and pots of milk. There was firewood of *śamī*, and *palāśa*, and *puṃnāga;* there was honey and butter, spoons made of *udumbara* wood, and gilded conch-shells. Given leave by Dāśārha,* the wise Dhaumya, Yudhiṣṭhira's house-priest, marked out a northeastward sloping altar-area. He then seated the exalted king and Kṛṣṇā, daughter of Drupada, upon a smooth, universally auspicious throne that shone with the brilliance of fire; it was covered with a tiger skin and stood upon firm feet. Next he poured an offering into the fire with the prescribed ritual

15 formula. He then poured the consecrating water upon Yudhiṣṭhira, son of Kuntī, installing him as lord of the earth. The royal seer Dhṛtarāṣṭra and all the subjects of the kingdom did likewise.

Then they beat *paṇava* drums, *ānaka* drums, and kettledrums. The King of Law received all that in accordance with Law, and then he honored

* = Kṛṣṇa.

them in the prescribed way with generous presents. He gave the brahmins who were fully accomplished in the recitation of the Veda and imbued with virtuous behavior a thousand *niṣka* gold pieces and so made them bid him "good fortune." The brahmins were delighted, king, and they pronounced good fortune upon him, and victory. Honking like geese, they praised Yudhiṣṭhira. "Lucky it is you won victory, strong-armed Yudhiṣṭhira! Illustrious king, lucky it is you ended up performing with courage the Lawful Deeds that are proper to you! Lucky it is the Gāṇḍīva bowman,* Bhīmasena Pāṇḍava, and you and the two sons of Mādrī and Pāṇḍu are all in good health, king! That you all escaped from that hero-destroying battle having killed your enemies! Quickly, son of Pāṇḍu, do the things that need to be done for the future."

So, Bhārata, welcomed back in this way by the strictly observant brahmins, Yudhiṣṭhira, the King of Law, took back his great realm in the company of his allies.

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

41.1 After listening to the statements of his subjects that befit that time and place, King Yudhiṣṭhira made this answer. "We sons of Pāṇḍu are blessed, since you bulls among brahmins gathered here declare our virtues, whether accurately or not. I think surely you good men are just being kind to us, since you say we are so perfectly endowed with good qualities, though you are seeking nothing for yourselves.

"Our father, the great king Dhṛtarāṣṭra, is our highest God, and those who wish to please me must obey his commands and heed his preferences. It is because of him that I am still alive after my vast slaughter of my kinsmen. I will always obey him unflaggingly. If you would be kind to me, my friends, then please comport yourself toward Dhṛtarāṣṭra as you did before. He is the lord of the universe for you, as he is for me. The entire earth is his, and so is every one of the Pāṇḍavas. Bear in mind what I say, good men." That scion of Kuru then discharged all his subjects, those from town and country alike, saying, "Pass by your king and then go as you like."

The Kaurava then installed Bhīmasena as the heir apparent. With great pleasure he designated Vidura, whose understanding was deep, for advice, for reasoned conclusions, for consideration of sixfold policy. He assigned the copious° Saṃjaya, who was endowed with copious virtues, to keep track of what has been done and what has not yet been done, and likewise of revenues and expenditures. The king assigned Nakula to keeping track of the size of the army and of its provisions and pay, and also to the inspection of laborers. The great king Yudhiṣṭhira assigned Phalguna† to disrupting the circle of enemies around the kingdom and to the suppressing

* That is, Arjuna. † = Arjuna.

of wild peoples. That burner of his enemies assigned his most excellent house-priest Dhaumya to the Vedic rites and other duties of the brahmins. And he commanded that Sahadeva stand near him at all times; Sahadeva was to guard the king in all circumstances, O lord of peoples. The king took pleasure in assigning whomever he thought suitable to whatever task, this one and that one to this task and that.

That slayer of enemy heroes, ever mindful of Law, always tenderly devoted to Law, said to Vidura, Saṃjaya, and the highly intelligent Yuyutsu, "Get up! Get up! You men must do precisely and carefully whatever my father the king needs done. And anything the people of the town or the country ever need to have done must be done in accordance with Law after securing the king's permission.

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

42.1 Then Yudhiṣṭhira, a king of elevated intellect, had the first-month memorial rites for those who were slain in the war performed for each one individually.° Glorious King Dhṛtarāṣṭra gave the funeral gifts for his sons°—food graced with every desirable quality, cattle, riches, and diverse precious gems. Yudhiṣṭhira gave those for Karṇa, the exalted Droṇa, Dhṛṣṭadyumna, Abhimanyu, and the Rākṣasa son of Hiḍimbā,* and of the allies who had assisted him, Virāṭa, and so on. And together with Draupadī he gave those for Drupada and for Draupadī's sons. Mentioning each and every one of these individually, he gratified thousands of brahmins with riches, clothes, gems, and cattle. And mentioning this one and that one of other kings who had no friends, the king gave offerings for them too. The son of Pāṇḍu had diverse traveler's lodges, watering-stations and water-tanks built as a funeral offering for all his allies. Having discharged his debt toward them (and so having freed himself from being liable to criticism among the public), the king, Lawfully watching over his subjects, had now fulfilled his responsibilities. He paid honor to Dhṛtarāṣṭra as before, and to Gāndhārī and Vidura and to all in the Kaurava household and their servants. The Kaurava king honored all the women there whose men had been slain, or whose sons had been killed, and he compassionately extended his protection to them. Kindness was most important to the king—the lord favored those in distress, the blind, and the wretched with housing, clothes, and food. Having conquered the entire earth and having paid his enemies what he owed them, King Yudhiṣṭhira passed the time a happy man without a rival.

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

43.1 After Yudhiṣṭhira of great wisdom had been consecrated as king and taken over the kingdom he, now clean and bright,° his hands folded in respect, said to the Dāśārha of lotus eyes, "Kṛṣṇa,° Tiger of the Yadus, I

* And of Bhīma, that is, Ghaṭotkaca; see endnote at 42.4.

have recovered this realm of my father and grandfathers through your favor, your guidance, your might, your deep understanding, and your courage. I bow down to you, Lotus-eyed One, over and over again, O Subduer of Your Enemies.

"Some say you are the One Person, some say you are the Lord of the Sātvatas.° The highest seers praise you with many different names. 5 Adoration to you, Maker of All Things, the Very Soul of All Things, the Origin of All Things, Viṣṇu, Jiṣṇu, Hari, Kṛṣṇa, Vaikuṇṭha, Supreme Person! In ancient time you became a baby in Aditi's womb for seven nights. You are the one Pṛśnigarbha, even though they say you occur in three Ages of the World. You are called Śuciśravas, Hṛṣīkeśa, Ghṛtārcis, the Goose, the one Śambhu with three eyes, lord Dāmodara, the Boar, Fire, the Big Sun, the Scrotum, he who has Tārkṣya,* the Man Who Conquers Armies, Śipiviṣṭa,° Long-strider, He Who Dwells in Speech, the Fierce Commander of Armies, the Hidden One Who is the Real Winner of Prizes, the Unfallen One Who Fells His Enemies, Synthesis, Transformation, the 10 Bull.° You are the Mountain That Defines the Path, Vṛṣagarbha, Vṛṣākapi, the Wave That Rules the Ocean; you are the One with Three Peaks, the One with Three Foundations, and he who is Three-ways Unfallen. You are Total Ruler, Ruler, Ruler of Yourself, Ruler of the Gods, the Bestower of Law, Bhava,† Lord,‡ Bhū,§ Overlord,‖ Dark One;# you are the Dark Path. Maker of Good Sacrificial Offerings, him to whom healers turn for healing, you are Kapila,** and Vāmana,†† the Fixed Rite of Sacrificial Worship, the Bird, and Jayatsena.‡‡ He Who Wears the *śikhāṇḍa* Tonsure, Nahuṣa, the Brown One,§§ He Who Touches the Sky, he Who Brings Wealth Back, the Dark Brown One, the Ox, the Golden One, He Who Is a Good Shot, He Who Is the Kettle-drum. You Who Have a Penumbra of Light-rays about You, Who are the Lotus of Splendid Richness, the Blue Lotus, the Keeper of Flowers, Ṛbhu, the Lord Who Is Subtly Present in Everything; you are 15 recorded as being the Sāvitra. You are the Ocean, Brahmā, the Purifier, the House, and the Bow. They say you are the Golden Embryo, Svadhā, and Svāhā, O Keśava.

‖‖ "You are the Source of all this and its Dissolution, Kṛṣṇa.
In the beginning you send forth everything that is here;

* Tārkṣya is the eagle Garuḍa. † = Being, Existence. ‡ = *vibhu.*
§ = Being, Existence; the Earth, the World.
‖ = *abhibhu.*
\# = Kṛṣṇa, repeated.
** = tawny; or the sage of the Sāṃkhya tradition.
†† = the Dwarf incarnation of Viṣṇu.
‡‡ = "he whose army wins." §§ Or "mongoose."
‖‖ The chapter ends with two stanzas of irregular triṣṭubhs.

everything that is here is in your control, O Womb of All. I bow down to you, who hold horn, discus, and sword in your hand."

Kṛṣṇa of the lotus-eyes, praised in this way by the King of Law in the midst of the assembly hall, was gratified. The preeminent Yādava congratulated the Bhārata, the eldest Pāṇḍava, with copious and lavish praise.

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

44.1 The king then dismissed all his subjects. Given leave by him, they all went to their own homes. The wise King Yudhiṣṭhira then spoke winningly to the ferociously aggressive Bhīma, Arjuna, and the twins. "Your bodies have been wounded in the great war by all the different weapons of our enemies. You are exhausted and grievously afflicted with sorrow and rage. Because of me, you, the highest of men, endured the 5 hardship of living in the wilderness as if you had been villains. Now you should celebrate this victory however you like, however you please. I shall meet with all of you tomorrow, after you have rested and recovered your faculties."

Then, as if he were Indra, the strong-armed Wolf-belly* took possession of Duryodhana's palace with its lofty terraces, its numerous splashes of gem-stones, and its throngs of serving men and women. His brother had given it to him with Dhṛtarāṣṭra's permission. And as Bhīma took Duryodhana's so, at the direction of the king, the strong-armed Arjuna took possession of Duḥśāsana's palace, which was garlanded with high terraces, adorned with golden gateways, thronged with serving men 10 and women, and full of riches and grain. The delighted King of Law, Yudhiṣṭhira, then gave Durmarṣaṇa's palace—which was even better than Duḥśāsana's, being trimmed with gems and gold and resembling Kubera's palace—to Nakula, who deserved the best, because he had been emaciated in the great forest. He gave to Sahadeva, who always did favors for him, Durmukha's superb palace, which was splendidly opulent, trimmed with gold, overflowing with women with lotus-petal eyes, and filled up with couches. When he acquired that palace, Sahadeva celebrated the way Kubera did when he gained Kailāsa. Yuyutsu, Vidura, the illustrious Saṃjaya, Sudharman, and Dhaumya went each to his own 15 dwelling. That tiger-man Śauri† went along with Sātyaki to Arjuna's palace, the way a tiger goes to his lair in the mountains.

In those places they were all furnished with fit food and drink, and spent the night happily. After awakening refreshed, they went to attend King Yudhiṣṭhira.

* = Bhīma. † = Kṛṣṇa.

12(84e) Kṛṣṇa Vāsudeva Inaugurates Bhīṣma's Instruction of Yudhiṣṭhira

12.45–55 (B. 45–55; C. 1532–1986)
45 (45; 1532). Yudhiṣṭhira gives various gifts to others not yet honored, including the main members of Dhṛtarāṣṭra's entourage (1–10). He then approaches Vāsudeva as the sun rises behind him and expresses gratitude for Kṛṣṇa's help in regaining the kingdom (10–15). Kṛṣṇa, however, is in deep meditation and says nothing (20).
46 (46; 1553). Yudhiṣṭhira marvels at Kṛṣṇa's stillness and praises him as the Supreme Person and God. He submits himself as a devotee to Kṛṣṇa and asks him to explain his trance (1–5). Kṛṣṇa resumes normal consciousness and explains that he was communing with Bhīṣma as that one lay upon his bed of arrows, meditating on Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa praises Bhīṣma with a hymn, and he urges Yudhiṣṭhira to go to Bhīṣma for instruction before his knowledge and wisdom are forever gone (10–20). Yudhiṣṭhira agrees to go to Bhīṣma so that Bhīṣma might have sight of Kṛṣṇa again before he dies (25–30). Kṛṣṇa calls for his chariot, and the chariot is elaborately described (30–35).
47 (47; 1588). King Janamejaya asks about Bhīṣma's demise. Vaiśampāyana describes how Bhīṣma still lies prone upon the shafts of numerous arrows. Absorbed in meditation upon Kṛṣṇa, Bhīṣma is surrounded by numerous seers such as Vyāsa, Nārada, and Devasthāna (1–5). Bhīṣma praises Kṛṣṇa with a long and elaborate hymn, "The King of Hymns" (10–60). Intuiting Bhīṣma's devotion to him, Kṛṣṇa mounts his chariot and, together with the Pāṇḍavas, travels out to where Bhīṣma lies (65–70).
48 (48; 1698). Vaiśampāyana describes the grotesque carnage that still lies upon Kuru's Field (1–5). As they travel, Kṛṣṇa points out to Yudhiṣṭhira the lakes where Rāma, son of Jamadagni, refreshed his ancestors with kṣatriya blood (5). Yudhiṣṭhira asks how kṣatriyas were regenerated after Rāma's twenty-one slaughters of them, and Kṛṣṇa begins to tell him this (10–15).
49 (49; 1715). Kṛṣṇa describes a mix-up in which an exemplary brahmin was born in the kṣatriya lineage of Gādhi (that is, Viśvāmitra, the kṣatriya who became a brahmin seer) and an exemplary kṣatriya was born in the lineage of the brahmin seer Bhṛgu (Rāma, son of Jamadagni) (1–25). At the time, a mighty kṣatriya king, Arjuna Kārtavīrya of the Haihaya lineage, roamed the earth and fed city after city to the hungry God Fire. He burned down the hermitage of the seer Vasiṣṭha, and the seer cursed him to have his arms cut off in battle with Rāma (30–35). Arjuna's malicious sons stole a calf from the hermitage of Jamadagni, and Rāma recovered the calf, killing Arjuna (35–40). Arjuna's sons then killed Jamadagni, and Rāma swore to rid the earth of all kṣatriyas. Rāma mired the earth in kṣatriya blood and then retired to the forest (40–45). Thousands of years later Rāma was chagrined to learn that he had overlooked some kṣatriyas. He renewed his efforts vigorously and repeatedly, but the kṣatriya women managed to save some of their sons. Twenty-one times over Rāma rendered the earth free of kṣatriyas, and then he offered the earth to the seer and Progenitor Kaśyapa. Kaśyapa took the earth and banished Rāma to the other side of the sea, in order to preserve some remnant of kṣatriyas (45–60). Having no kings, the Earth sank down in the ensuing disorder, and Kaśyapa rescued her. She listed various kṣatriyas that had been harbored and raised in various places upon her, and she requested that Kaśyapa make some of the remnant kṣatriyas kings. Kaśyapa complied, and these are the ancestors of the Pāṇḍavas and the rest today (60–80).
50 (50; 1806). Yudhiṣṭhira is amazed at the story of Rāma (1). The whole group arrives where Bhīṣma lies like a fading sun. They greet the seers seated around Bhīṣma and sit down around him themselves (5–10). Kṛṣṇa is taken aback at Bhīṣma's weakness. He greets Bhīṣma, questions him about his pain, and praises his vast knowledge and his many virtues (10–25). Kṛṣṇa then urges Bhīṣma to instruct Yudhiṣṭhira in the everlasting Laws and dispel his grief (30–35).
51 (51; 1844). Bhīṣma praises Kṛṣṇa as the Lord God (1–5). Kṛṣṇa praises Bhīṣma for his loving devotion to Kṛṣṇa as God and speaks of the heavenly rewards that await Bhīṣma after the remaining fifty-six days of his life. Mentioning that Bhīṣma's vast learning will vanish from the earth at his death, Kṛṣṇa urges Bhīṣma to instruct Yudhiṣṭhira and drive off his grief (10–15).
52 (52; 1862). Bhīṣma demurs at the suggestion that he offer instruction in the presence of Kṛṣṇa (1–5). He is also too weak and uncomfortable (5–10). Kṛṣṇa promises to relieve Bhīṣma's pain and weakness and to clear his mind (10–20).

The gathered seers praise Kṛṣṇa with recitations from the Vedas, flowers fall from the sky, music is heard in the heavens, and celestial damsels appear. Then everything grows calm and the sun sets. Kṛṣṇa and the Pāṇḍavas take their leave, promising to return the next day, and they travel magnificently to Hāstinapura as the moon rises (20–30).
53 (53; 1896). Kṛṣṇa sleeps and then rises early and meditates upon the everlasting brahman. *Singers and musicians celebrate and honor him. Kṛṣṇa rises, bathes, recites a secret text, attends to the fire, and gives a thousand brahmins, who each knew all four Vedas, a thousand cows each. He then looks at himself in a clean mirror and sends Sātyaki to see if Yudhiṣṭhira is ready to go see Bhīṣma (1–10). Yudhiṣṭhira orders that all the attendants and soldiers who accompanied him yesterday stay away from Bhīṣma from now on. The Pāṇḍavas and Kṛṣṇa then go back to The Field of Kuru, "the field of the whole of the Law," where Bhīṣma lies. Consternation comes over Yudhiṣṭhira as he approaches Bhīṣma and sees him closely.*
54 (54; 1925). Janamejaya asks what was said as all were gathered round Bhīṣma. Vaiśaṃpāyana relates how seers and kings, led by Nārada and Yudhiṣṭhira respectively, gather round Bhīṣma. The seer Nārada urges everyone to ask the dying Bhīṣma whatever questions of Law they may have (1–10). When no one dares address him, Yudhiṣṭhira urges Kṛṣṇa to question him first. Kṛṣṇa inquires after Bhīṣma's comfort, and Bhīṣma feels profoundly refreshed by Kṛṣṇa's favor, a sublime awareness has pervaded his mind. He is ready to teach, but he wants to know why Kṛṣṇa himself does not teach what needs to be taught (10–20). Kṛṣṇa says that he has placed his own consciousness in Bhīṣma in order to magnify Bhīṣma's glory and establish his instructions to Yudhiṣṭhira as an enduring source of important wisdom like the Vedas (20–30). Kṛṣṇa encourages Bhīṣma to teach, and tells him he is in fact obliged to do so because he is learned (30–35).
55 (55; 1964). Bhīṣma assents to teach. Praising Yudhiṣṭhira for his ascetic and Brahminic virtues, Bhīṣma insists it must be Yudhiṣṭhira who questions him about Law (1–10). Kṛṣṇa explains that Yudhiṣṭhira hesitates to approach because of his shame and fear. Bhīṣma justifies the killing even of fathers, sons, and teachers as part of the Law of kṣatriyas. Yudhiṣṭhira approaches and embraces Bhīṣma, who then solicits his questions (10–20).

Janamejaya said:

45.1 What else did the King of Law, Yudhiṣṭhira of great brilliance, do after acquiring the kingship? Please tell me that now, brahmin. Or what did the hero, the blessed Hṛṣīkeśa, the highest teacher of the three worlds, do, seer? Please inform me of that.

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

O foremost of kings, listen carefully as I recount to you exactly what the Pāṇḍava did after he paid homage to Vāsudeva. After the King of Law, Yudhiṣṭhira of great brilliance, acquired the kingship, he made all the four 5 Orders of society each follow only its own proper Law. The son of Pāṇḍu then proclaimed that one thousand exalted brahmins who had completed the course of Vedic training should each have one thousand *niṣka* gold pieces. He then gratified the desires of his servants, who depended upon him, the guests who had entrusted themselves to him, and even logic-choppers who were destitute. To his house-priest Dhaumya, he gave cattle by the tens of thousands and a wealth of gold and silver and various clothes. Always mindful of Law, he treated Kṛpa properly as his teacher,° and holding strictly to proper practice, he honored Vidura. That best of all generous donors gratified all who resorted to him with fit food and drink, 10 various clothes, and seats and couches. The glorious king, the most excellent of kings, having attained peace of mind, then paid homage to Dhṛtarāṣṭra's son Yuyutsu. King Yudhiṣṭhira informed Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Gāndhārī, and Vidura that the kingdom was healthy, and then he sat.

He pleased the entire city in the same way, Janamejaya, and then, his hands joined respectfully, he approached the exalted Vāsudeva. He saw Kṛṣṇa seated upon a large couch that was adorned with gems and gold. Kṛṣṇa looked like a dark blue rain cloud against Mount Meru. Wearing yellow silk, adorned with heavenly jewelry, his appearance was brilliantly 15 dazzling, like a gemstone in a gold setting. Shining with the Kaustubha gem° upon his chest, and with the rising sun appearing just behind the peak of his tiara, he was like Udaya, Sunrise Mountain. In all the three worlds there is nothing whatsoever comparable to him.

Yudhiṣṭhira approached the exalted Viṣṇu in human form, and then he smiled and spoke to him sweetly. "O best of those who have deep understanding, I hope you spent the night comfortably. I hope, O you who have never fallen, that all your senses are at ease. Relying upon that Goddess, your Higher Mind, O best of those who have deep understanding, we have taken back the kingdom, the earth is now in our power. Blessed one who made the bold march of three steps across the three worlds, by your grace we have gained victory and eminent glory. And we did not fall away from Law."

20 But the blessed one had entered into deep meditation, and he said nothing at all to the King of Law, Yudhiṣṭhira, as that one spoke these words to him.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

46.1 What an absolute marvel this is! You, of unlimited ferocity, are absorbed in deep meditation! I hope all will be well in all the three worlds, O you whose highest concern is the world. Supreme Person, it baffles my mind that you have withdrawn, giving yourself up to the fourth path of meditation. You have restricted the wind that moves through your body, performing its five functions; all your senses have been arrested within your Lower Mind,* and your senses and your Lower Mind have been settled in your Higher Mind,† and that whole group, God, has been directed
5 to your Knower of the Field.‡ The hairs upon your body do not stir, your Higher Mind is still, and your Lower Mind is too, Mādhava. You are motionless, you have become like a post, or a wall, or stone! As the flame of a lamp that is out of the wind burns without wavering, Unfallen One, so you, blessed one, God, your resolve rigidly fixed, do not stir. If I am worthy of hearing it, and if it is not a secret of yours, then I humbly submit myself and beg you to dispel my wonder, God. You are the Maker and the Changer,§ you are the decaying and the undecaying; without beginning or end, you were there at the beginning, Supreme Person. O best of the supporters of Law, I submit myself to you, I am devoted to you, I bow my head down to you, tell me about this meditation completely.

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

10 The blessed one, the younger brother of Vāsava,‖ then set his Lower Mind, his Higher Mind, and his senses down, each in its own province, and with a smile said this.

"Bhīṣma, who is like a fire dying out, as he, that tiger among men, lies upon that bed of arrows, is meditating upon me. So my mind# has gone to him.

"The twang of whose bow and the clap of whose hand would burst forth as if from lightning—not even the king of the Gods could stand against him—I have gone to him in my mind.

"Who long ago carried off the three maidens, charging violently against the whole assembled ring of kings—I have gone to him in my mind.

"Who fought against the Bhārgava** for twenty-three nights without Rāma's overcoming him—I have gone to him in my mind.

15 "The prince whom Gaṅgā bore as a baby in her womb, who was a pupil of Vasiṣṭha—I have gone to him in my mind, king.

* = manas; see endnote at 46.3. † = buddhi. ‡ = *kṣetrajña*, the "soul."
§ = *kartṛ* and *vikartṛ*. ‖ = Viṣṇu; Vāsava = Indra.
= manas, the "Lower Mind."
** = Rāma Jāmadagnya; see endnote at 46.14.

"Who possessed tremendous fiery brilliance and deep understanding, and maintained knowledge of the celestial shots and of the four Vedas and their auxiliary texts—I have gone to him in my mind.

"He was, O son of Pāṇḍu, a dear pupil of Rāma Jāmadagnya and a treasury of all special learnings—I have gone to him in my mind.

"He formed the group of his senses into one and restrained his Lower Mind with his Higher Mind, and then he approached me for shelter—so my mind has gone to him.

"O bull among men, this most excellent man of those who support Law, knows the past, the future, and the present—so my mind has gone to him.

20 "When this tiger of a man has gone to heaven by virtue of his deeds, the earth, son of Pṛthā, will be like a starry night from which the moon has disappeared. So, Yudhiṣṭhira, approach the son of Gaṅgā, Bhīṣma of ferocious attack, embrace his feet and ask him whatever is on your mind. O lord of the earth, ask him about the Law of the four Vedas, of the sacrificial rites that need four priests, of the four religious Patterns of Life, and of the four Orders of society. When Bhīṣma, the main draft-ox of the Kauravas, is gone, the sum of what is known will shrink. That is why I urge you."

The king, who already knew the Laws well, was choking back tears after he heard that excellent and apt statement of Vāsudeva's. He then said
25 to Janārdana, "Mādhava, what you have said about the majesty of Bhīṣma is right. I have no doubt of it, O you who honor me. I have heard the exalted brahmins talking about the exalted Bhīṣma's great eminence and his majesty! O destroyer of enemies, what you, the Maker of the Worlds, tell me, is not something I need to think over, O joy of the Yādavas. But since you have decided to do me a favor, Mādhava, I shall honor you first and then see Bhīṣma. When the blessed sun has turned back to the North* he† will go to his heavenly worlds. So, strong-armed one, the Kaurava
30 ought to have sight of you. You are the God of the beginning, you are both what decays and what does not decay; his seeing you would be his attaining that,‡ for you are the storehouse that is *brahman.*"

When the Slayer of Madhu heard the King of Law's statement, he said to Sātyaki, who stood at his side, "Get my chariot hitched up." Sātyaki stepped away from Kṛṣṇa and said to Dāruka, "Get Kṛṣṇa's chariot hitched up."

* = the winter solstice.
† = Bhīṣma.
‡ = what does not decay, what is indestructible *(akṣara)*.

* As soon as he heard what Sātyaki said, Dāruka, folding his hands respectfully, announced to the Unfallen One that his superb chariot—its limbs trimmed with gold, lined with ridges of sapphires and crystals,° gold fastened upon its wheels, radiant like the rays of the sun, straight-riding, decorated with diverse colorful gems and jewels, dazzling like the newly risen sun, carrying a standard with a flag showing a colorful
35 Tārkṣya†—was all hitched to the very best horses—Sugrīva and Sainya in the lead—their bodies decked out in gold, horses that ran swift as thought.

Janamejaya said:

47.1 How did the grandfather of the Bharatas lying on the bed of arrows give up his body? What discipline of yoga meditation did he use?

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

O King, tiger of the Kurus, become pure within, and concentrated, and listen attentively to how the exalted Bhīṣma gave up his body. As soon as the sun had turned back onto its northern course, he deliberately made himself enter into the Self. Bhīṣma, with hundreds of arrows heaped upon him, was like the sun with its strew of rays, and he lay there with supreme
5 splendor,° surrounded by the most excellent brahmins—Vyāsa who was famous for the Vedas, Nārada the seer of the Gods, Devasthāna, Vātsya, Aśmaka, and Sumantu. He was surrounded with these and a number of other illustrious and exalted sages‡ distinguished for their zeal and their self-control—he was like the moon with the planets. But Bhīṣma, who was a tiger among men because of his deeds, his mind, and his words, remained there upon the bed of arrows, his hands joined in respect, meditating upon Kṛṣṇa. With a robust voice he praised the Slayer of Madhu, the Lord of Yoga Meditation, Whose Navel is the Lotus,° Viṣṇu, Jiṣṇu, the Lord of the Universe. Hands joined in respect, completely clean and bright, Bhīṣma, the most excellent of eloquent speakers, completely devoted to the supreme Law, then praised the Lord Vāsudeva.

10 "I want to worship Kṛṣṇa. May the Supreme Person be pleased by the statement I wish to proclaim,° which will be both extensive and concise. Pure, intent upon him, having joined myself with the Self of All, I resort to that Progenitor, the Goose, he who sits on what is pure, the one who is at the apex; that one—the Lord of Elements—upon whom all beings rest, like so many gems upon a thread, and into whom all the elements and their attributes enter; upon whom, an enduring, rigidly stretched string, all that exists abidingly and all that exists only ephemerally is tied, like a

* Three regular upajāti triṣṭubh stanzas; the middle one is a jagatī.
† = Garuḍa, the name of the aquiline bird upon whom Viṣṇu sometimes rides.
‡ Text note: See endnote at 47.6a.

garland; who is the body of everything, who is the movement of everything.

"I adore the adorable one,° Hari, who has a thousand heads, a thousand feet, a thousand eyes, whom they say is the God Nārāyaṇa, the Final
15 Goal of everything, the most minute of the minute, the biggest of the big, the heaviest of the heavy, the very best of the excellent;

"Whom they praise in the *vākas* and the *anuvākas,*° in the *niṣads* and the *upaniṣads,* and in the *sāmans* as the one who does the real deed, as the Truth in truths;

"Whom they praise with four supreme, secret, divine names as four selves inhabiting Existence,°* the Lord of Sātvatas;

"Which God the Goddess Devakī bore, from Vasudeva, for the protection of the earthly *brahman,*† the way the fire-stick is mother to the blazing fire.

"He is the one whom that man whose desires have departed, who is devoted to no other, who, in order to gain infinity, has worshiped Govinda as the stainless Self, sees positioned within himself.

20 "In the primordial‡ time he is called 'the Person,'§ and he is called 'Brahmā' at the beginning of every Age; at the time of destruction he is called Saṃkarṣaṇa.‖

"I resort to that Progenitor# whose deeds are beyond those of the two Gods Wind and Indra, whose fiery brilliance is beyond that of the two Gods Sun and Fire, whose Self is beyond the senses and the Higher Mind.

"I bow to that one whom they say is the maker of everything, the Lord of what moves and what stands, the overseer of the universe, the undecaying supreme place, who is the single golden-colored embryo Aditi bore twelve-fold for the destruction of Diti's offspring, to him who is embodied as the Sun.

"I bow to him who refreshes the Gods with the immortal elixir in his bright phase and the ancestors in his dark phase, who is the king of brahmins, to him who is embodied as the Moon.

25 "I bow to him, knowing whom as the Person, as the light shining on the further side of great darkness, one goes beyond death; to him who is embodied as what is to be known.

* = *sattva.* † = the Vedas. ‡ *purāṇe.*
§ = *puruṣa;* note the *pur-* element common to this word and *purāṇe.*
‖ = Kṛṣṇa's older brother Balarāma.
\# = Prajāpati.

"I bow to him whom groups of seers sing of as the Great One* in the Bṛhat *uktha,*° whom they sing of in the fire, whom they sing of in the great rite, to him who is embodied as the Veda.

"I bow to him who resides in the *ṛc,* the *yajus,* and the *sāman,* whose bodily form is the five kinds of sacrificial offering, whom they stretch out in seven strands, to him who is embodied as the rite of sacrifice.

"I bow to him who is the eagle named *yajus,* with the meters of the verses for his body, the triple mode of chanting† for his head, and the Rathaṃtara and Bṛhat *sāmans* for his eyes, to him who is embodied as the hymns of praise.

"I bow to him who was the seer born at the sacrificial session of a thousand Soma pressings done by the All-Creators, the golden-colored bird, to him who is embodied as the goose.

30 "I bow to him whom they call the eternal 'irreducible,' that is, 'the syllable,'‡ which has words as its body, 'sound-combinations'° for its joints, and is manifested by vowels and consonants; to him who is embodied as speech.

"I bow to him who, using Right Order,§ the womb of immortality,‖ and for the sake of the pious, strictly observant, stretches across the fields the barrier ridge° that is embodied in the activities that aim at Merit, to him who is embodied as the True.

"I bow to him whom those performing their particular Lawful Duties and seeking the rewards of those particular Lawful Deeds worship in their particular Lawful Rites, to him who is embodied as Law.

"I bow to him who is the Unmanifested the great seers discern within the Manifested, the Knower of the Field sitting in the Field, to him who is embodied as the Field.

"I bow to him whom those of the School of Sāṃkhya Discrimination proclaim as the 'Seventeenth,' who is the self that is the witness within oneself, surrounded by the sixteen attributes,° to him who is embodied as Sāṃkhya Discrimination.

35 "I bow to him, the light whom those performing yoga meditation see when, not sleeping, their breathing controlled, their senses fully controlled, they stay at the level of Existence,° to him who is embodied as yoga meditation.

* = *bṛhat.* † = Trivṛt *stoma.*
‡ = *akṣara,* the "indestructible," the "undecaying" basic unit of language.
§ = *ṛta.*
‖ *ṛta* is *amṛtayoni;* see the first endnote at 47.31.

"I bow to him to whom those renouncers who have become quiet within, who are in no danger of existing again, go, where bad and good leave off; to him who is embodied as Absolute Freedom.

"I bow to him who, at the end of a thousand Ages becomes a fire of blazing flames that completely devours beings, to him who is embodied as the dreadful.

"I bow to him who, after he has devoured all beings and made the universe one big ocean, sleeps there all by himself, like a child, to him who is embodied as illusory magic.

"I bow to him who has a thousand heads, the Measureless Person, who is embodied as the sleep of yoga meditation° upon each of the four oceans in turn.

40 "I bow to him, the one lotus in the navel of the Unborn One of Lotus Eyes,* upon which† all this is established, to him who is embodied as the lotus.

"I bow to him in the midst of whose hair are the rain-clouds, in the joints of all of whose limbs run the rivers, in whose belly are the four oceans, to him who is embodied as water.

"I bow to him who revolves through the Ages of the World in segments of days, seasons, equinoctial semesters, and years, who causes the Emission of all things at creation and then later their Reabsorption, to him who is embodied as Time.

"I bow to him whose mouth is the whole *brahman,* whose arms are the *kṣatra* entire, whose thighs and belly are the vaiśyas, upon whose two feet the śūdras depend, to him who is embodied as the Social Orders.

"I bow to him whose mouth is Fire, whose head is the Sky, whose navel is Space, whose feet are the Earth, whose eye is the Sun, whose ears are the Quarters of the Horizon,° to him who is embodied as the world.

45 "I bow to him, who, they say, preserves the five kinds of objects of sense, by means of their unique attributes,° when people's sense faculties experience those objects, to him who is embodied as that preserver.

"I bow to him who, made up of food, drink, and fuel, bringing increase of sap and life-breath, supports beings, to him who is embodied as the breath of life.

"I bow to him who is beyond—beyond Time, beyond the rite of sacrifice, beyond what is existing and not existing, the beginning of

* = Kṛṣṇa, Viṣṇu; see endnote at 47.40.
† That is, the lotus.

everything who himself has no beginning, to him who is embodied as everything.

"I bow to him who confuses beings with bonds of affection and passion for the preservation of the created world, to him who is embodied as confusion.

"I bow to him whom those with knowledge understand when they realize that the knowing that occurs, situated amidst the five senses, is the Self's knowing, to him who is embodied as Knowing.

50 "I bow to him whose body is immeasurable in every way, whose eyes see without end, whose farthest reaches are incalculable, to him who is embodied as what can only be imagined.

"I bow to him whose locks are always twisted on his head, who carries the staff, whose body is pot-bellied, whose arrow-quiver is his water-pot, to him who is embodied as Brahmā.

"I bow to Tryambaka, who carries the spear, the exalted Lord of the thirty Gods, whose erect penis is smeared with ashes, to him who is embodied as Rudra.

"I bow to him who is embodied as the five elements, as the beginning and the end of all beings, who is the complete opposite of anger, malice, and error, to him who is completely at peace.

"I bow to him, upon whom all rests, from whom all comes, who is all, who is in all places, who is always made up of all things, to him who is embodied as All.

55 "I bow to you, maker of everything, embodied as everything, source of everything. You who stand beyond the five elements are the final emancipation of beings.°

"I bow to you in the three worlds. I bow to you beyond those three. I bow to you in all the quarters of the horizon. You are the supreme end of all and everyone.

"I bow to you, blessed Viṣṇu, origin and end of the world. You, Hṛṣīkeśa, are the Maker and the unconquerable Destroyer.

"With this I see your divine forms of being in the three strata.° I really do see your everlasting form. The sky is filled with your head, the Goddess Earth by your feet, the three worlds by your energy—you are the everlasting Person.

60 "Those who worship Govinda, the Unfallen One, who has the color of *atasī* flowers* and wears a yellow robe, have no fear.

* = blue; see endnote at 47.60.

"As what really exists is made up of Viṣṇu, as the sacrificial offering is made up of Viṣṇu, as all things are made up of Viṣṇu, so the evil I have done will be eliminated.

"Lotus-eyed One, highest of the Gods, think of what is best for me who want to win that blessed course to the next world, who have humbly submitted myself to you and am devoted to you.

"So have I praised Viṣṇu, the source of knowledge and asceticism, who has no source himself. Worshiped by this sacrificial rite of speech, may the God Janārdana be pleased with me."

As soon as he said this, Bhīṣma put his mind upon that one, and then he 65 made a bow, saying, "I bow to Kṛṣṇa." Having apprehended Bhīṣma's devotion through yoga meditation, Mādhava, Hari, went there to give him the celestial knowledge of all three times.°

When Bhīṣma's hymn ended, the reciters of the *brahman*, their throats choked with tears, worshiped that man of great intellect with words. Those foremost brahmins quietly praised Keśava, the Supreme Person, and Bhīṣma over and over again.

Having become aware of Bhīṣma's devotional meditation upon him, the Supreme Person was full of joy, and he suddenly stood up and went for his chariot. Keśava and Sātyaki went in one chariot, and the exalted 70 Yudhiṣṭhira and Dhanaṃjaya* went in another. Bhīmasena and the twins went on one chariot, and Kṛpa, Yuyutsu, and the *sūta* Saṃjaya went on another. As these bulls among men set out on their chariots that looked like cities, they shook the earth with the tremendous noise of their wheels.

† While on the way he was glad to hear the cheers of the twice-born° praising him as the Best of Persons. The Slayer of the demon Keśin was exhilarated, and he greeted the other people as well, as they bowed toward him with folded hands.

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

48.1 Then Hṛṣīkeśa, King Yudhiṣṭhira, the four Pāṇḍavas, Kṛpa, and the others went directly to the Field of Kuru on those chariots that seemed like cities, drawn by swift horses, the flags of their standards flying brilliantly. They went down to Kuru's Field where those exalted kṣatriyas had surrendered their bodies, where the ground was still a mess of hair, bones, and marrow. That field was heaped with mountains of bones from elephants and horses, and it was strewn with what seemed to be billions of 5 human skulls. It was heaped with funeral pyres and crowded with piles of leather shields and sharp-bladed weapons. It seemed like Time's drinking garden abandoned after use. Those great warriors went directly to the

* = Arjuna.
† One verse in the classical Rucirā meter.

Field of Kuru and saw that it was haunted by mobs of ghosts and bunches of Rākṣasas.

While they were on the way, the strong-armed Kṛṣṇa, the joy of all the Yādavas, told Yudhiṣṭhira about the ferocity of Rāma Jāmadagnya. "Way over there, son of Pṛthā, you can see the five lakes of Rāma. He used them to refresh his ancestors with the blood of kṣatriyas. That lord stripped the earth of kṣatriyas twenty-one times over, but now, in our days, Rāma has quit doing that."

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

10 When you tell me that Rāma stripped the earth of kṣatriyas twenty-one times over, I have a lot of trouble accepting that. If Rāma burned the seed of the *kṣatra,* O bull of the Yādavas, how did the *kṣatra* rise up again, O you of unlimited ferocity? O bull of the Yādavas, how did that exalted one, the blessed Rāma, destroy the *kṣatra?* How did it grow back again? Kṣatriyas were killed by the millions in the great Bhārata war, and kṣatriyas were littered all over the earth, O best of speakers. So, Vṛṣṇi, you who have Tārkṣya* for your emblem, cut through my problem. Our highest learning is from you, Kṛṣṇa, younger brother of Vāsava.†

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

15 ‡ So then, as they traveled, the lord, Gada's elder brother,§
narrated to Yudhiṣṭhira, that man of incomparable vitality,
truly and completely how the earth came to be crowded with
kṣatriyas.

Vāsudeva said:

49.1 Listen, son of Kuntī, to what I have heard while the great seers discussed Rāma's birth and what prompted his actions. And just as those kṣatriyas whom Rāma son of Jamadagni slew by the millions sprang up again in the lineages of kings, so will those who were slain in the Bhārata war.

Ajahnu was the son of Jahnu, and Ballava was his son, and a lord of the earth named Kuśika, who knew the Laws, was his son. The equal on the earth of the God Thousand Eyes,‖ Kuśika performed terrific asceticism with the intention, "I want to have a son who is never conquered, who will be lord of the three worlds." When Thousand Eyes, the Smasher of Cities, saw that he had done terrific asceticism, the God thought, "He is capable of producing the boy." So, having gone there himself, the lord of the lords of the world became his son! He who punished the Daitya demon Pāka with death became the son of Kuśika named Gādhi! Gādhi had a daughter named Satyavatī, and the lord gave her to Ṛcīka, the son of a brahmin seer.°

* = Garuḍa.
† = Viṣṇu, that is, Kṛṣṇa; Vāsava = Indra.
‡ One regular jagatī triṣṭubh stanza.
§ = Kṛṣṇa. ‖ = Indra.

That Bhārgava* was very pleased, O son of Kuntī, O joy of the Kurus, and he had recourse to a ritual *caru* offering in order to get a son for himself, and for Gādhi as well. The Bhārgava Ṛcīka summoned his wife and said to her, "You use this *caru,* and this one is for your mother. A fiery, blazing son, a bull among kṣatriyas, will be born of her; invincible to the kṣatriyas of this world, he will slay the bulls of the kṣatriyas. But this *caru,* good woman, will produce a son who is steadfast, ascetic, completely calm within, the most excellent of brahmins." After saying this to his wife, that joy of the Bhṛgus, the wise Ṛcīka, went into the wilderness, intent upon his asceticism.

At the very same time King Gādhi and his wife arrived at Ṛcīka's hermitage. He was engaged in visiting a series of holy bathing sites. At that time Satyavatī picked up both the *carus* and handed them over to her mother. She was not unmindful of her husband's directions,° but she was all excited. But then, son of Kuntī, the mother unwittingly gave her own *caru* to the daughter, and made the daughter's *caru* end up within her self. Now Satyavatī carried the baby with the fiery, blazing body and horrible appearance that would finish off the kṣatriyas.

O Tiger-king, Ṛcīka saw her by means of his yoga meditation. He then said to his fair-colored wife, "Good woman, you have been cheated by your mother's switching the *carus.* A tremendously powerful son who will do cruel deeds will be born to you, and your brother will be born an ascetic who is absorbed in *brahman.*° I infused the entire *brahman* into it through the power of my asceticism." When her husband had said this to her, the illustrious Satyavatī put her head to his feet, and trembling, she said: "Blessed one, great sage, please do not pronounce such a sentence upon me now, 'You will have a son who is a disgrace to brahmins.'"°

Ṛcīka said:

This was not the result I planned for you, good woman. Your son will do terrible deeds. And the *caru* and your mother are the cause of it.

Satyavatī said:

Sage, you could create whole worlds if you wanted to, but what about me? O best of men who recite prayers, I want to have a son who is peaceable and upright.

Ṛcīka said:

Good woman, I have never spoken a false word, not even in situations where it would make no difference; would I do so after kindling a fire with special formulas for creating a *caru?*

Satyavatī said:

25 Please let it be so for our grandson. O best of men who recite prayers, I want a son who is peaceable and upright.

Ṛcīka said:

There is no difference to me between son and grandson, well-colored woman, so it will be as you said, good lady.

* = that "scion of Bhṛgu," that is, Ṛcīka.

Vāsudeva said:

So Satyavatī bore the Bhārgava boy Jamadagni, who was given to asceticism, completely calm, peaceable. And Gādhi, the joy of Kuśika, obtained as his heir Viśvāmitra, who was the equivalent of a brahmin seer, as he was endowed with the entire *brahman*. Ṛcīka's son Jamadagni engendered the extraordinarily fierce Rāma, an outstanding man who knew every kind of learning, who was a virtuoso of the Veda of the Bow, who destroyed the kṣatriyas like a blazing fire.

30 Now at this very time there was a mighty man of the Haihaya lineage, a fiery kṣatriya named Arjuna, who was the son of Kṛtavīrya. He burned in warfare this whole earth of seven continents and its cities with the might of his weapons and his own two arms, and he did so in accordance with the supreme Law. The ravenous Citrabhānu* approached him, begging for food, and that thousand-armed conqueror gave Agni his alms. In his eagerness to blaze away the mighty Citrabhānu burned villages, forts, hamlets, and towns with that one's† arrows. He of vast heat burned 35 mountains and forests with King Kārtavīrya's‡ majestic splendor. Fanned by the wind, Citrabhānu, with the Haihaya, burned down to nothing the forest where the hermitage of Varuṇa's son,§ was located. Great king never fallen,‖ the mighty Āpava# was enraged that Kārtavīrya had burned his hermitage, so he cursed Arjuna. "In your folly, Arjuna, you did not bypass my woods here, but burned it down, so Rāma will cut off your arms in battle." Then, great Bhārata king, the mighty Arjuna became ever peaceable, devoted himself to the brahmins, and became a grantor of refuge and a heroically generous donor.

Arjuna's very powerful sons were the cause of their father's being killed 40 in accordance with the curse. They were always haughty and malicious. O bull of the Bharatas, they rustled the calf of Jamadagni's cow without the wise Haihaya king Kārtavīrya's knowing. Then Jamadagni's manly son Rāma cut off Arjuna's arms and led the bellowing calf back to his own hermitage—master of them, he led it right out of their fort. The sons of Arjuna became a frenzied mob. Mindlessly they went to Jamadagni's hermitage and lopped that exalted sage's head off his body with *bhalla*-tipped arrows, while the exalted Rāma was off in search of firewood and *kuśa* grass. Rāma was absolutely furious, and in his outrage at their killing his father, he promised to rid the earth of kṣatriyas, and he took up his 45 weapons. That mighty tiger of the Bhṛgus immediately attacked and cut down every one of the sons and grandsons of Arjuna Kārtavīrya. After killing thousands of Haihayas, the Bhārgava was still absolutely furious, so he made the earth bloody with mud. After that one of tremendous, blazing energy had rid the earth of kṣatriyas, he was filled with the greatest sorrow and went into the forest.

* = Agni, the God Fire. † King Arjuna's. ‡ = Arjuna, son of Kṛtavīrya.
§ = the seer Vasiṣṭha. ‖ Kṛṣṇa addresses Yudhiṣṭhira. # = Vasiṣṭha.

After some thousands of years had passed, that powerful man, who was naturally bad-tempered, experienced a profound shock. The great ascetic Parāvasu, the son of Raibhya and the grandson of Viśvāmitra, insulted 50 Rāma in a public assembly: "Rāma, all those who are assembled at the sacrifice being held at 'Yayāti's Landing,'° Pratardana and the others, are these not kṣatriyas? You boast in public assemblies, but your oath is false, Rāma. You took to your mountain° because you were afraid of these kṣatriya men." When the Bhārgava learned from Parāvasu that the earth was once again overspread with hundreds of kṣatriyas, he took up his weapons. Those hundreds of kṣatriyas whom Rāma had left living, had grown into mighty men and had become lords of the earth. Once again he killed them right off, even the young boys. But yet again the earth was 55 filled with those that had been in their mothers' wombs. As soon as the babies were born, he killed again.

During that time kṣatriya women did manage to save some of their sons. Twenty-one times over that lord rid the earth of kṣatriyas, and then he gave it to Kaśyapa° for the priest's present at the conclusion of a Horse Sacrifice. But Kaśyapa, now endowed with Royal Splendor, pointing with the *sruc* spoon in his hand, made this pronouncement, to ensure there would be a remnant of kṣatriyas: "Go to the further shore of the southern ocean, great hermit, you are not to stay anywhere in my area, Rāma." Then, out of terror of Jamadagni's son, the ocean fashioned for him on its 60 farther side the solid ground of the Śūrpāraka country.° But Kaśyapa, great king, received the earth, settled it with the brahmins, and entered the great forest.

After that, O bull of the Bharatas, śūdras and vaiśyas began acting on their whims with the wives of brahmins. When there is no king in the human world, the weaker are oppressed by the stronger, and no one has any control over his own possessions. After some time, the Earth entered the Rasātala underworld, for she was not being protected in accordance with prescription, that is, by kṣatriyas preserving Law. Kaśyapa supported 65 Earth on his lap* as it sank down, so tradition calls the earth "Urvī."† The Goddess Earth then propitiated Kaśyapa and made a request of him, asking for kṣatriyas with brawny arms to be her guardians.

"Brahmin, there are some kṣatriya bulls who were born in the clan of the Haihayas whom I have preserved in the midst of other men; let them guard me, sage. Lord, there is a descendant of Pūru,° a son of Viḍūratha, who has been raised by the bears on Bear Mountain. Likewise, there is a descendant of one of Sudās' offspring who has been watched over by the infinitely powerful seer Parāśara, who is sympathetic towards him and offers the sacrificial rites for him. He does all that seer's work, like a śūdra, 70 and is known as Sarvakarman‡—let him be a king to protect me. There is a

* = *ūru*, "thigh"; another etymological explanation.
† = The Wide One, a name of the earth.
‡ = "Does Everything," "Does Anything."

son of Śibi who possesses tremendous fiery brilliance and is called Gopati.[*] He has been watched over in the forest by cows[†]—let him protect me, sage. There is a glorious son of Pratardana named Vatsa,[‡] who was raised in a cow pen by calves—let him be a king to protect me. Aṅga, the son of Diviratha, the grandson of Dadhivāhana, was watched over by Gautama on the banks of the Gaṅgā. The illustrious and strong-armed Bṛhadratha, who is preeminent in prosperity upon the earth, was watched over by cow-tailed monkeys on Buzzard Peak. There are three kṣatriya sons of Turvasu in the lineage of Marutta, and they are the equals of the lord of the Maruts[§] in heroic power; the ocean has watched over them. These kṣatriya heirs have been heard of here and there—let them watch over me right and I will stand without shaking. For my sake their fathers, and their grandfathers too, were killed in war by the tireless Rāma, who said, 'I will make an end of them, no doubt of it.' I do not want to be always protected by someone who lacks the prowess to wage war."

Then Kaśyapa, having brought together those whom Earth had listed, consecrated as kings those kṣatriyas who were esteemed for their heroic might. These men you see here about you are the sons and the grandsons of those men who established the lineages.

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

> [‖]Talking like this to that most excellent of the supporters of
> Law, Yudhiṣṭhira, the foremost man of Yadu's lineage[#] traveled
> quickly upon his chariot, like the blessed Sun entering the
> three worlds with his rays.

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

50.1 After hearing of those deeds of Rāma, King Yudhiṣṭhira was absolutely amazed. In response, he said to Janārdana, "My, oh my, Vṛṣṇi! Rāma is as ferocious as the exalted Śakra,[**] since he could rid the earth of kṣatriyas in a rage! And those who carried on the kṣatriya clans lived in terror of Rāma and were sheltered by cows, the ocean, the cow-tail monkeys, bears, and monkeys! My, oh my! The world is fortunate! Men on earth are very lucky that such a Righteous[††] deed was done by a brahmin,° Unfallen One."

Son,[‡‡] that's how those two, the Unfallen One and Yudhiṣṭhira, went along to where the lord Gāṅgeya[§§] lay upon the bed of arrows. Then they beheld Bhīṣma lying amid the strew of arrows in that supremely Meritorious spot° along the Oghavatī River, a fire surrounded by its own

* = "Lord of Cows." † = *go-s.* ‡ = "Calf." § = Indra.
‖ One upajāti triṣṭubh. # = Kṛṣṇa.
** = Indra, the God of kṣatriya warriors, whom Rāma was implicitly defying by his protracted vendetta.
†† = *dharmya.*
‡‡ = Janamejaya, so addressed by Vaiśampāyana.
§§ = Bhīṣma, son of the Gaṅgā River.

rays,[*] like the sun in the evening. Sages sat in waiting around him like the Gods around Śatakratu.[†] Kṛṣṇa and the king, the King of Law, and the four Pāṇḍavas and Śāradvata[‡] and the others spotted Bhīṣma from a ways off. They jumped down from their chariots and then, after restraining their agitated minds and focusing their senses, they approached the great sages. Govinda and Sātyaki and those Kauravas greeted the seers—Vyāsa and the others—and then they approached Gāṅgeya. The Yadus[§] and Kauravas asked those seers if their asceticism prospered, and then those bulls among men all made a circle around Gāṅgeya and sat down.

Then, seeing that Gāṅgeya was like a fire fading out, Keśava, somewhat taken aback, said to Bhīṣma. "I hope all you know is as clear as before. I hope your mind is not muddled, O best of speakers. I hope your body does not suffer too much from the pain of your wounds from the arrows. Bodily pain really is more intense than mental pain. Granted, mighty one, you can choose when you shall die because your father, Śaṃtanu, who was habitually devoted to Law, granted you that wish, but that does not cool your pain. Even the tiniest sliver in the body produces pain, so what of you, Bhārata, who are covered with heaps of arrows? Obviously, this not something I need to explain to you, who could lecture on the origin and end of living beings, or on the highest good, to even the Gods. You are distinguished for your knowledge. Really, what has been, what will be, and what is all sit right in the palm of your hand. You know the rebirth of beings and the benefits that result from doing Lawful Duties. You whose wisdom is vast, you are a storehouse of *brahman.* I see you here in this flourishing kingdom with all your limbs intact, you suffer no disease, you are surrounded by thousands of women, but you are celibate. Prince, father, in all the three worlds we have never heard of anyone's having such innate power besides Bhīṣma, the son of Śaṃtanu, always true to his promises, a tremendously heroic warrior, singularly dedicated to Law; who, having energetically warded off death, lies amid a strew of arrows. With regard to truth, asceticism, giving gifts, the matter of performing sacrifices, the Veda of the Bow, the Veda, and constantly inquiring, we have never heard of any great warrior like to you—gentle, pure, self-restrained, devoted to the welfare of all beings. You could, with a single chariot, conquer the Gods together with the Gandharvas, and the Suras, Asuras, and Rākṣasas. No doubt of it. You, strong-armed Bhīṣma, are the like of Vāsava[‖] among the Vasus. The seers normally reckon you as a ninth Vasu,° but you are not ninth in good qualities. I recognize you, most excellent of men. You are well known among the thirty Gods, and you have tremendous power on your own. O Indra among men, we have never seen nor heard of any man anywhere on earth who is your equal in good

* A reference to the arrows sticking out of Bhīṣma's body on all sides.
† = Indra. ‡ = Kṛpa. § = Kṛṣṇa and Sātyaki.
‖ = Indra.

qualities. You even go beyond the Gods with all your attributes, king, for you are able, by the power of your ascetic heat, to create whole worlds full of moving and unmoving beings.

30 "Now, Bhīṣma, drive off the grief of Pāṇḍu's eldest son, who is suffering because his kin were wiped out. The Laws that are reckoned for the four Orders of society along with those of the four Life Patterns are all known to you, Bhārata. And those everlasting Laws that are declared in the four Vedas and in the rituals of four priests,* and those that are fixed in the School of Sāṃkhya Discrimination and in the Regimen of Yoga Meditation. And that one primordial Law° that is observed by all the four Orders and is not contradicted—you know that too, Gāṅgeya. The whole of History and Purāṇa is known to you, and the entire Science of Law† is always 35 present to your mind. And whatever matters there are in this world that occasion uncertainty, there is no one other than you, O bull among men, to resolve them.

> ‡ "O Indra among men, use your wisdom and remove the grief sprung up in the Pāṇḍava's mind. Men like you, whose minds are so richly developed, ought to relieve people who are perplexed."

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

51.1 When° he heard what the wise Vāsudeva said, Bhīṣma tipped his head slightly and respectfully joined his hands. Then he said, "I bow to you blessed Viṣṇu, origin and end of the worlds. You, Hṛṣīkeśa, are the Maker, and the unconquerable Destroyer. Adoration to you, Maker of Everything, Essence of Everything, Origin of Everything. You are the final emancipation of beings, who stands beyond the five elements. Adoration to you in the three worlds and adoration to you beyond those three. Lord of Yoga Meditation, adoration to you, for you are the final end of all and everyone.

5 "With that which you just described about me,° Supreme Person, I can see your divine forms of being in the three strata.° And I see your eternal form too as it really is. The seven streams of the wind are held fast in you with your immeasurable brilliance. The sky is filled with your head, the Goddess Earth by your feet, the four directions with your arms, the sun is your eye, Śakra§ is fixed in your manly power. Indeed we see in our mind° your never-fallen body, which has the color of *atasī* flowers and is draped with a yellow robe, like a storm-cloud with flashes of lightning. Lotus-eyed One, highest of the Gods, think of what is best for me who want to win that blessed course to the next world, who have humbly submitted myself to you and am devoted to you."

* That is, the more elaborate Vedic rites of sacrificial worship.
† = Dharmaśāstra. ‡ A regular jagatī triṣṭubh. § = Indra.

Vāsudeva said:

10 Since you obviously do have the highest devotion to me, O bull among men, I have shown you my divine form. Indra among kings, I do not show my true self to anyone who is not a devotee, nor to a devotee who is not righteous, nor to one who does not have control of himself. But you are a devotee of mine who always follows what is right; who is pure and dedicated to self-control, asceticism, truthfulness, and making gifts. Bhīṣma, prince, you deserve to see me because of your own ascetic merit. Indeed, heavenly worlds from which one does not return stand ready for you.

> * Hero of the Kurus, fifty-six days remain for you to live.° Then you will abandon your body and realize the rewards of your good deeds.
>
> 15 Here are the Vasus on their chariots in the form of flames of fire, though they are invisible. They are watching over you until the sun turns northward.
>
> O hero among men, as soon as the blessed Sun has turned back to the northern direction under the compulsion of Time, you will go to the heavenly worlds which a wise man never leaves.
>
> And, Bhīṣma, when you have gone to that world, the things you know will vanish completely. Thus they all were gathered closely together in you for the purpose of giving Law a careful examination.°
>
> Make an apt statement to Yudhiṣṭhira about the harmony of Law and Profit. His own learning has been affected by his grief for his kinsmen, but he is faithful to his promises. Drive off his grief.

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

52.1 When Bhīṣma son of Śaṃtanu heard Kṛṣṇa's helpful statement regarding Law and Profit, he folded his hands in respect and responded. "O strong-armed lord of the world, soothing one,† Nārāyaṇa, Unfallen One, I am overwhelmed with joy to hear what you say. But how can I speak in your presence, O lord of speech, when all of speech is concentrated within your speech? Whatever has been done in this world, is going to be done, and is being done derives from you, God. The worlds consist of your mind. 5 Only someone who would be willing to describe the world of the Gods in the presence of the king of the Gods would speak before you about the

* The first of five regular upajāti triṣṭubhs.
† = "Śiva."

matters taught in the learned treatises on Law, Pleasure, and Profit. My intellect is deranged by my wounds from the arrows, O Slayer of Madhu, my limbs are weak, and my mind is not clear. These arrows torment me like poison or fire, Govinda. I do not have the mental clarity° with which to lecture on anything. The energy I have comes from consuming my mental resources,° my life-breaths are rushing together, my joints ache, and my head is spinning. My speech is halting because I am so weak; how could I possibly lecture? Holy one, joy of the Dāśārha clan, be pleased with me.

10 Unfallen One of strong arms, excuse me from having to say something. In your presence even the Lord of Speech* would shrink from talking. I cannot distinguish atmosphere, sky, or earth.† I remain here only through your power, Slayer of Madhu. Therefore, lord, you yourself must tell the King of Law directly what would be good for him. You are the tradition in all the sacred traditions. How could someone like me speak when you are present in the world, you who are the everlasting maker of the world? It would be like a pupil speaking when his teacher is present.

Vāsudeva said:

This is a statement appropriate to the main workhorse of the Kauravas, who is full of tremendous heroic energy and fortitude, who sees every issue.

15 And Gāṅgeya, what you tell me about the pain of your arrow wounds—take a boon for that, Bhīṣma, one that comes from my being pleased with you, lord. You shall have no fatigue, nor any thick-headedness, nor any fever, nor any pain, Gāṅgeya, nor shall you have any hunger or thirst. All of your learning shall appear to you, faultless one; your mind will not stumble over anything. Your mind, Bhīṣma, will always dwell in the Attribute Lightness, free of Energy and Darkness,‡ like the moon unobscured by clouds. Anything you conceptualize pertaining to Law, or anything pertaining to Profit, you shall have your very best mind with

20 regard to that. Tiger among kings, you will make use of a celestial eye and see this fourfold throng of beings,° O man of unlimited courage. Making use of the eye of knowledge, Bhīṣma, you will see the fourfold web of creatures as if it were a fish in clear water.

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

Then every one of those great seers in the company of Vyāsa praised Kṛṣṇa with passages of the Vedas—*ṛc* verses, *yajus* formulas, and *sāman* songs. Then, O bull among men, a shower of flowers of all the different seasons fell from the sky on the spot where the Vṛṣṇi and Gāṅgeya and the Pāṇḍavas were. There was celestial music, and bunches of Apsarases went

25 there. Nothing unpleasant or untoward was anywhere in sight. A fresh, pleasant, soothing wind bearing every fragrance blew there, and then the

* = Bṛhaspati, the seer of the Gods.
† = the three worlds once again.
‡ Lightness = *sattva*, Energy = *rajas*, Darkness = *tamas*, the three Attributes, or *guṇa-s*, of Nature.

air became calm and the animals and birds grew quiet as they made their sounds and cries. A moment later the blessed sun of a thousand rays was seen in the west, as if it were burning a forest off in some lonely place.

Then all the great seers stood up and saluted Janārdana, Bhīṣma, and King Yudhiṣṭhira. Keśava made a bow to them, and the Pāṇḍava did likewise, and so did Sātyaki, Saṃjaya, and Kṛpa Śāradvata. After those seers who delighted in Law had been perfectly honored by those men, they said to them, "We shall meet again tomorrow," and they hurried off as

30 suited each of them. Then Keśava and the Pāṇḍavas saluted Gāṅgeya and circled rightward around him. They then climbed into their fancy chariots.

> * Then that army—with chariots with golden and ivory draw-poles, with rutting elephants that looked like mountains, with horses running as fast as eagles fly, with soldiers armed with bows—
>
> Beyond measure did that army stream before them and after them, like the great river Narmadā before and after it goes from the east to Bear Mountain.
>
> Then, in the east, the blessed moon rose up and gladdened that army and restored plants, whose juices had been drunk by the sun, to their proper attributes.
>
> Then the bulls of the Yadus and the Pāṇḍavas entered the city, as dazzlingly glorious as the city of the Gods. Tired, they entered those excellent palaces which befit them, like kings of the beasts returning to their caves.

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

53.1 After he entered his palace, the Slayer of Madhu slept. He awakened when there was but one watch remaining in the night. Mādhava entered upon the path of meditation, took note of all the particular kinds of knowledge, and after that he meditated upon the everlasting *brahman*. Then sweet-voiced singers, learned men acquainted with the Vedas and Purāṇas, praised Vāsudeva, the Maker of Everything, the Progenitor—they recited, clapping their hands, and sang. They played horns, *ānaka*

5 drums, and tambourines by the thousands. The exquisite sound of lutes, *paṇava* drums, and flutes was heard coming from the mansion, like a long, drawn-out laugh. Likewise, they intoned sweet words of blessing for King Yudhiṣṭhira blended in with the music and songs.

The strong-armed Dāśārha, the Unfallen One, then arose and bathed. Then, his hands respectfully folded, he recited a secret text, approached

* Three regular upajāti triṣṭubhs of the jagatī variety followed by a final classical Rucirā stanza.

the fire, and stood still. Then Mādhava promised a thousand cows to each of a thousand brahmins who knew the four Vedas. Kṛṣṇa then touched something auspicious, looked at himself in a clean mirror and said to
10 Sātyaki, "Descendant of Śini, go to the king's palace and see whether the tremendously brilliant Yudhiṣṭhira is ready to see Bhīṣma." At Kṛṣṇa's command Sātyaki hurried over there. He approached Yudhiṣṭhira and said to him, "The wise Vāsudeva's best chariot is ready, and Janārdana is about to go to the son of the river. O illustrious King of Law, Kṛṣṇa waits for you. You should now do what is to be done immediately."*

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

My best chariot must be readied, O Phalguna,† you whose glory is
15 unmatched. The troops shall not go, only we will go. I must not trouble Bhīṣma, the best of the supporters of Law, so, Dhanaṃjaya, even the heralds must stay back here. Starting today, Gāṅgeya will declare the highest secrets, therefore, son of Kuntī, I do not want to encounter any person there.

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

After hearing that command, Dhanaṃjaya the son of Kuntī announced to him that his best chariot was ready. Then King Yudhiṣṭhira, the twins, Bhīma and Arjuna—like all the five elements together—went to Kṛṣṇa's palace. As the exalted Pāṇḍavas were arriving, the wise Kṛṣṇa went out to
20 his chariot with Sātyaki. Those great warriors standing in their chariots conversed, asking each other if they had spent the night comfortably, and then they set out with those best of chariots rumbling like storm-clouds. Dāruka lashed Vāsudeva's horses Cloud Bloom, Thunderhead, Trooper, and Good Neck. Lashed by Dāruka, Vāsudeva's horses started out, king, tearing up the ground with their hooves. Seeming to gulp down the sky, these swift, powerful horses crossed the Field of Kuru, the field of the whole of the Law. They went to where the lord Bhīṣma rested upon the bed of arrows in the midst of brahmin seers, like Brahmā amidst the crowds of the Gods.

25 Govinda then descended from his chariot, and so did Yudhiṣṭhira, Bhīma, the Gāṇḍīva bowman, the twins, and Sātyaki. They paid homage to the seers, raising their right hands. Surrounded by them like the moon by the stars, the king then approached Gāṅgeya, like Vāsava going to Brahmā. The strong-armed king looked at him lying upon the bed of arrows, like a fallen sun, and his fear grew into panic.

Janamejaya said:

54.1 Tell me, great sage, what was the talk in that gathering of mighty men after the sons of Pāṇḍu drew near that tiger of a man, the illustrious and courageous Bhīṣma Devavrata—the joy of Śaṃtanu, the son of Gaṅgā,

* That is, join Kṛṣṇa.
† = Arjuna.

the never-fallen one who was always mindful of Law,° who had conquered himself and remained true to his pledge—as he lay on that hero's bed of arrows after all those troops had been slaughtered.

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

King, as Bhīṣma, the main workhorse of the Kaurava armies, lay upon the bed of arrows, seers of the highest attainment led by Nārada went to
5 him, as did the princes who had survived—Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Kṛṣṇa, Bhīma, Arjuna, and the twins—led by Yudhiṣṭhira. Those exalted men burned with grief as they approached Gāṅgeya, the grandfather of the Bharatas, who seemed like a fallen sun.

Nārada, who seemed like a God, thought for a moment and then spoke to all the Pāṇḍavas and the surviving princes. "I say the time has come for Bhīṣma to be questioned. Gāṅgeya is setting as if he were the sun. He will soon expel the breath of life. Everyone should draw near and question him.
10 He knows all the different Laws of all the four Orders of society. Long before now this old man gained the heavenly worlds earned by those who give up their bodies in war. Quickly now, ask him about whatever doubtful matters you have in your minds."

At Nārada's words the princes went up to Bhīṣma. But they were unable to question him, and they just looked at each other. Yudhiṣṭhira son of Pāṇḍu then said to Hṛṣīkeśa, "Son of Devakī, no one but you can question grandfather. You speak first, fierce Slayer of Madhu, for you, my brother,° know all the Laws better than any of us." At the Pāṇḍava's words the blessed Keśava, the Unfallen One, went up to the unassailable Bhīṣma and spoke to him.

Vāsudeva said:

15 I hope the night passed to day comfortably for you, O best of kings. I hope your mind is present to you and is clear. I hope, faultless one, that all the things you know are still clear to your mind. I hope your heart is not weary. I hope your mind is not agitated.

Bhīṣma said:

By your favor, faultless Govinda, my fever, confusion, fatigue, weariness, exhaustion, and pain have just left me. Supremely brilliant Kṛṣṇa! I see all that ever was, ever will be, and is, as if it were a fruit here in my hand! By your granting me this favor, Unfallen One, I see completely all those Laws declared in the Vedas, and all those contained in the final
20 parts of the Vedas.* The Law declared by the highly educated men turns within my heart, Janārdana. I know the Laws of different lands, different kinds of people,° and different clans. The goal that is sought within the four sets of Laws for the religious Patterns of Life stands in my heart. I know all the Laws for kings, Keśava. I will state what needs to be stated on any and every subject, Janārdana, for by your favor a sublime comprehension has

* = *vedānta*, that is, the Upaniṣads.

pervaded my mind. Invigorated from meditating upon you, it's as if I've become young again. Janārdana, by your favor I am capable of declaring the highest good.

But why do you not proclaim the highest good to Pāṇḍu's son yourself? What do you have to say about this, Mādhava? Tell me right now.

Vāsudeva said:

25 Scion of Kuru, know that I am the root of all glory and all blessing. All ideas true and false° originate from me. Who in the world would be impressed if someone made the observation, "The moon has cool rays?" In the same way, who would be impressed by my being full of glory?

I wish to afford you more glory, O tremendously brilliant Bhīṣma. So I have concentrated my vast understanding in you. O protector of the earth, as long as the earth stands firm, your fame will circulate through the worlds without ever diminishing. And what you say to the son of Pāṇḍu as he questions you will last on the face of the earth like the words of the

30 Vedas. And whoever will bind himself to its authority will experience after death the fruit of all his meritorious actions. For this reason, Bhīṣma, I have given you divine understanding. How could your glory expand any further? As long as a man's glory spreads among people over the earth, he has a place that does not waste away, that is a certainty.

The princes who have survived the slaughter sit all around you, king, and they want to ask you questions about the Laws. Speak to them, Bhārata. You, good man, are advanced in age, and you are thoroughly familiar with the norms of behavior that have been taught in tradition. You are well versed in the ancient Laws of kings and in the later ones as

35 well. From the moment you were born, no one has ever seen anything crooked about you. All these princes know you as someone who knows the Laws for mankind.* Speak to them, king, like a father to his sons, and tell them the best method for ruling.

You have always respectfully waited upon the seers and the Gods. So, as I see it, since you have been asked repeatedly, you must speak now to those who are eager to learn the Laws, omitting nothing. The experts say it is a Law that a knowledgeable man must speak. One who does not answer incurs a grievous fault, lord. Therefore, bull of the Bharatas, when your sons and grandsons question you about the everlasting Laws, speak to them, for you are knowledgeable, and they are seeking knowledge.

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

55.1 That tremendously brilliant scion of the Kaurava clan then said, "All right, I will declare the Laws. My voice and mind are firm, by your favor, Govinda. You truly are the everlasting soul of all that is!

"But, faultless one, it must be Yudhiṣṭhira who asks me about the Laws. Then I will be pleased, and I will declare the Laws.

* Text note: See the endnote for 54.35c.

"All the seers were overjoyed when that bull among princes, that exalted one so scrupulous of Law, was born—that son of Pāṇḍu must question me.

"Among all those Kurus who observe Law and blaze with glory, there is none who is his equal—that son of Pāṇḍu must question me.

5 "Ever graced with fortitude, self-control, sexual continence, forbearance, Lawfulness, vigor, and brilliance—that son of Pāṇḍu must question me.

"Truthfulness, generous giving, asceticism, cleanliness, inner calm, quick wits, and a quiet manner—all these are found in him, and that son of Pāṇḍu must question me.

"Always scrupulous of Law, he would never do anything against Law out of craving, anger, fear, or expediency°—that son of Pāṇḍu must question me.

"He honors and treats well his in-laws, guests, servants, those who have taken shelter with him, and those who are devoted to him—that son of Pāṇḍu must question me.

"He is always truthful, always forbearing, always relies upon knowledge, is gracious toward guests, and regularly makes generous gifts to those that are piously observant—that son of Pāṇḍu must question me.

10 "He regularly worships the Gods with sacrificial offerings and regularly recites the Veda; is always pleased to follow Law, and is calm within, having learned the esoteric teachings—that son of Pāṇḍu must question me."

Vāsudeva said:

Yudhiṣṭhira, ever mindful of Law, is filled with great shame, and he fears a curse—so he does not draw near to you.

Having slaughtered the world, this lord of the world fears a curse, O lord of peoples—so he does not draw near to you.

With his arrows he has killed teachers who were devoted to him, men whom he owed respect and honor, and relatives by both blood and marriage, men who deserved hospitality from him—so he does not draw near to you.

Bhīṣma said:

Kṛṣṇa, as giving, studying, and asceticism are Law for brahmins, the

15 striking down of bodies in battle is Law for kṣatriyas. It truly was Lawful and Meritorious Action that he kill fathers, grandfathers, sons, teachers,

affinal and blood relatives who proceeded against him wrongly in war. The kṣatriya who kills even his teachers in war, when they are greedy and wicked and turn their backs to their agreements, he, Keśava, knows what is Lawful. The kṣatriya who has been called to battle must always fight. Manu says that war is Meritorious, that it leads to heaven, that it is customary in the world.

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

After Bhīṣma had said this to him, the King of Law, Yudhiṣṭhira, humbly approached him and stood before him, where Bhīṣma could see him. He grasped Bhīṣma's feet, and Bhīṣma welcomed him. After Bhīṣma sniffed Yudhiṣṭhira's head, he told him, "Sit." Gāṅgeya, the bull among all men of the bow, then said to him, "Question me freely, son. Do not be afraid, most excellent of Kurus."

20

12(84) The Laws for Kings

Part 2: Bhīṣma's Instructions on the Laws for Kings

12.56–128 (B. 56–130; C. 1987–4778)

56 (56; 1987). Yudhiṣṭhira praises the Lawful Duties of kings and requests instruction in them (1–5). After worshiping Law, Kṛṣṇa, and the brahmins, Bhīṣma solemnly begins the instruction (10). Bhīṣma briefly recommends devotion to the Gods and the brahmins, taking energetic initiatives, truthfulness, and good character (10–20). He then moves on to the necessity of a king's being harsh as well as mild. In this connection he speaks first of the need to revere and protect authentic brahmins and to punish brahmin pretenders and wrongful brahmins, though he rules out corporal punishment of brahmins (20–30). He next recommends that the king cherish his people, though overindulgence must be avoided, and harshness is sometimes appropriate (30–40). The king must always avoid incurring others' disrespect (40–45). Bhīṣma then lists various ways the servants of an easy-going king take advantage of him (45–60).

57 (57; 2047). Bhīṣma recommends that a king be highly vigorous, getting rid of even his teacher or his son, if one or the other should threaten the welfare of the kingdom (1–10).

Bhīṣma recommends numerous different goals, ideals, virtues, and means for kings (10–30). Bhīṣma gives further description of kingly ideals, basically by describing various advantages enjoyed by a good king's subjects (30–35). He closes by emphasizing the necessity of a king's affording protection (40–45).

58 (58; 2092). Bhīṣma says several authorities on the Duty of kings emphasize the importance of kings' being protectors (1). He describes how it is accomplished by giving a long list of expedients for a king's survival and success (5–10). Quoting verses from Bṛhaspati, Bhīṣma reiterates the importance of the king's acting energetically in his own interests (10–15). He counsels Yudhiṣṭhira that a kingdom is complex and violent; a king must be devious and manipulative as well as straightforward (15–20).

Yudhiṣṭhira and the others take leave of Bhīṣma, perform the twilight ablutions and recitations, and return to the capital (20–30).

59 (59; 2122). Yudhiṣṭhira and his party return to Bhīṣma the next morning (1). Yudhiṣṭhira asks how it is that one man who is equal to other men in every way stands over others as a king, is worshiped like a God (5–10). Bhīṣma tells of the origins of kingship. After an originally ideal age when humans lived Lawfully without kings, decay set in that led to the complete disappearance of the Vedas and Law. The Gods, frightened because offerings to them had stopped, fled to Brahmā for help (10–25). Brahmā reassured them and then composed a massive, encyclopedic account on government in one hundred thousand lessons. A detailed list of the topics treated in this work is given (25–85). Bhīṣma praises Brahmā's work and then recounts a series of abridgements of it by Śiva, Indra, Bṛhaspati, and Kāvya (85–90).

The Gods once asked the Progenitor Viṣṇu to indicate who should preside over mortals. Viṣṇu emitted a son from his mind, Virajas. Virajas, his son, and his grandson all withdrew from royal responsibility. Virajas's great grandson, Anaṅga, ruled well, but Anaṅga's son Atibala indulged his senses. Atibala's son by Sunīthā (the mind-born daughter of Death), Vena, also indulged his senses and ruled badly. The seers killed Vena and churned two men out of his right thigh and right hand: From his right thigh emerged a man who became the ancestor of the outcaste Niṣādas, and from his right hand came a man accoutred as a warrior and learned in the Vedas and the science of ruling (90–105). Vena's son asked the

seers for guidance. The seers told him to rule the world in the service of Law and the Vedas. Vena's son assented, requesting that the brahmins assist him (105–15). Viṣṇu led the whole cosmos in consecrating him as king, and he presided over a golden age on the earth (115–25). Viṣṇu entered into him in order that kings be worshiped as Gods, and this is the reason for the preeminence of kings (130). The Goddess Śrī arose from a lotus growing from Viṣṇu's forehead, and she was established in kingship along with Law and Riches. Kingship is a beneficial institution, and good kings, who are human Gods, are beneficial (130–40).

12.60–66 (B. 60–66; C. 2268–2494) (84f) Permitted and Prohibited Occupations and Life-Patterns and the King's Responsibility to Enforce These.

12.67–71 (B. 67–70; C. 2495–2714) (84g) The Nature and Character of Kingship.

12.72–79 (B. 71–78; C. 2715–2961) (84h) Kings and Brahmins.

12.73–76 (B. 71–75; C. 2715–2868) (84h-1) The Necessary Complementarity of Kṣatriyas and Brahmins.

12.77–79 (B. 76–78; C. 2869–2961) (84h-2) Good and Bad Brahmins and the King's Responsibilities toward Them.

12.80–86 (B. 79–85; C. 2962–3227) (84i) The Servants of the King.

12.87–90 (B. 86–89; C. 3228–3361) (84j) The Fortified City, Economics, Taxation, and Treasury.

12.91–92 (B. 90–91; C. 3362–3462) (84k) The Song of Utathya.

12.93–107 (B. 92–106; C. 3463–3956) (84l) Law, Force, and War.

12.93–95 (92–94; 3463–3534) (84l-1) The Song Sung by the Seer Vāmadeva to King Vasumanas.

12.104–7 (B. 103–6; C. 3794–3956) (84l-2) The Conquest of One's Enemy by Indirect Methods.

12.105–7 (B. 104–6; C. 3847–3956) (84l-2a) The Sage Kālakavṛkṣīya's Instruction of Prince Kṣemadarśa of Kosala.

108 (107; 3957). Yudhiṣṭhira recapitulates the topics of the instruction up to this point and then asks how kingless tribal republics function, how they avoid dissolution. Yudhiṣṭhira inquires about the destructive function of secrecy in such groups (1–5). Bhīṣma first mentions greed and intolerance as the primary factors in the dissolution of republics, clans, and royal lineages (5–10). He then describes some of the mechanisms of group solidarity; he extols its benefits and describes the dire consequences (dissolution of the republic) of its absence (15–20). Bhīṣma argues that elitism is necessary in the republic and that secrets should circulate only among the leaders (20–25). Bhīṣma warns against other dangers to the unity of these federations—quarrels within clans, natural misunderstandings—and counsels that aggregation is the greatest refuge of federations (25–30).
109 (108; 3989). Yudhiṣṭhira asks if there is a most important obligation of Law. Bhīṣma replies that there is: honoring one's father, mother, and teachers. What these three agree upon must be done no matter what; Law is what they agree upon (1–5). Bhīṣma assimilates this triad to various triads of brahmin tradition, particularly the three worlds (5). He gives general exhortations to devotion to parents and teachers (10). Bhīṣma lists the relative superiority of these persons; one's mother is highest. A dissent in favor of teachers over parents is registered. There are then more general exhortations for respect of these three, and the dissenting voice persists in praising teachers over parents (15–25).

12.110–15 (B. 109–14; C. 4023–4230) (84m) Discerning Reality behind Surface Appearances in Difficult Circumstances.

12.116–19 (B. 115–19; C. 4231–4350) (84n) The Servants of the King, Part 2.

120 (120; 4351). Noting that many of the Laws for Kings have been explained, Yudhiṣṭhira asks Bhīṣma how these Duties should be carried out. Bhīṣma responds with a sampler of advice on kingly prudence. After declaring protection to be the most important task of kṣatriyas, Bhīṣma develops an extended analogy, exhorting the king to imitate various facets of the peacock's behavior: the king should be multiform, secretive, alert, aggressive, and so on (1–15). Bhīṣma then gives a variety of exhortations on what kings should do, focusing upon intelligent analysis, prudent management, the avid pursuit of wealth, and due care of his enemies (15–50).

12.121–22 (B. 121–22; C. 4408–4524) (84o) The Origin of the Rod of Punishment.

123 (123; 4525). Yudhiṣṭhira asks to learn about the origin and operation of the Group of Three (Law, Riches, and Love). Bhīṣma describes the complementarity of these three in terms of securing and enhancing the quality of one's body in the world and enjoying comfort and pleasure in the body. These three are all imbued with Energy (rajas)*; cessation from them is tantamount to pursuing Absolute Freedom, while rejecting them all is an act of Darkness* (tamas) *(1–10). Bhīṣma then relates* The Conversation between the Seer Kāmanda and King Aṅgāriṣṭha, *which uses the categories of the Group of Three to upbraid kings who neglect their duty and encourage nay-saying by failing to curb any subjects who flout Law and Riches (10–15). Their penance is to serve the Vedas, brahmins, and Law piously (15–20).*
124 (124; 4549). Yudhiṣṭhira asks to understand habitual virtue (śīla) *and to know how one becomes habitually virtuous. Bhīṣma responds by reciting* A Conversation between Dhṛtarāṣṭra and Duryodhana *(1–10). Duryodhana was upset because of Yudhiṣṭhira's opulent display of wealth at his Royal Consecration. Dhṛtarāṣṭra praised having a virtuous character as the basic source of worldly success (10–15). He then related to Duryodhana a history told by Nārada. When the demon Prahrāda resorted to virtue and gained Indra's kingdom, Indra approached Bṛhaspati for advice, and the brahmin sage counseled Indra to acquire Knowledge; but he told him to seek it from the Bhārgava Śukra, the chaplain of the demons. Indra got Knowledge from Śukra, but the brahmin sage then referred Indra to his demon rival, Prahrāda, to gain even better Knowledge. Disguised as a brahmin, Indra went to Prahrāda for instruction (15–25). Indra served him as a proper pupil, and eventually Prahrāda instructed him, telling him that he, Prahrāda, had won the rule of the three worlds by being virtuous. Prahrāda, delighted with the brahmin's pious service, gave him a further wish, and the disguised Indra requested Prahrāda's own virtuous character. Prahrāda complied and Indra left. But then virtue, Law, truthfulness, good conduct, might, and the Goddess Royal Splendor all left Prahrāda and went over to Indra. The Goddess explained to Prahrāda who the brahmin was and what the gift of virtue had meant (25–60). Duryodhana asked to know the basic nature of virtue, and Dhṛtarāṣṭra explained it in terms of kindness, generosity, and society's sense of what is honorable and shameful (60–65).*

12.125–26 (B. 125–28; C. 4622–4715) (84p) The Song of the Seer Ṛṣabha.

127 (129; 4716). Yudhiṣṭhira asks to hear more about Law, and Bhīṣma relates The Brief Exchange between Yama, Lord of the Dead, and the Seer Gautama. *The seer Gautama performed long asceticism. Yama came to him and, identifying himself as Dharma, offered him a favor. Gautama asked how one acquits oneself of what he owes his parents, and how one might enjoy heavenly worlds. Yama recommended the daily honoring of one's parents and worship of the Gods with Horse Sacrifices replete with presents for the priests (1–10).*
128 (130; 4727). Yudhiṣṭhira asks what recourse there is for a king whose rule is a complete shambles and who has no power or resources (1). Bhīṣma is reluctant to speak of this obscure Law, saying it is too subtle for speech or thought; Yudhiṣṭhira will have to figure such things out for himself, and he should approach the matter with a sophisticated eye for results (5–10). But he does then give Yudhiṣṭhira a complicated lecture introducing the subject of a secondary form of Law for times of distress (āpad). *Abstractions about Law are mingled with various principles of monarchic expediency which, Bhīṣma says, warrant a more sophisticated approach to "Law": There is one Law for normal times and one for times of distress; experts can see the difference (10–15). An emphasis upon wealth, survival, and the problem of using violence to accumulate wealth becomes the central theme. Harming others (the principal stumbling block of Rightness here) is inevitable, which is why kṣatriyas are required for rule (20–30). The fundamental Lawfulness of the king's expedient measures is argued further and reinforced by a comparison to pernicious actions that are done to perform rites of sacrificial worship (35–40). Bhīṣma closes with a few more generalizations about the importance of wealth to win this world and the next (40–45).*

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

56.1 Yudhiṣṭhira bowed down to Hṛṣīkeśa and saluted his grandfather. Then, given leave by all his elders, he questioned Bhīṣma.

"Those who know Law hold that kingly rule is the very highest Law, but I think it is a great burden. Speak to this matter, prince. Tell me in

particular about the Lawful Duties of kings, grandfather. The Lawful Duties of kings are the ultimate recourse of the entire world of living beings.

"The whole Group of Three* depends upon the Lawful Duty of kings, and the entire Law for gaining Absolute Freedom is quite clearly contained within it.

5 "Tradition teaches that the king's Merit-making performance of his Lawful Duties† is the tether that holds the world; it is like the reins for a horse, or the elephant driver's hook. The royal seers of the past were devoted to Law, and if it were to become utterly confused, there would be no order to the world; everything would be jumbled up. The king's Lawful Deeds expel malignant goings on that do not belong in the world, just as the rising sun obliterates demonic darkness.

"So, grandfather, most prominent of the Bharatas, tell me the fundamental principles of the Lawful Duties of kings, for you are the best among intelligent men. The highest learning for all of us comes from you, fierce warrior, for Vāsudeva regards you, sir, to be the foremost man of intellect."

Bhīṣma said:

10 I bow to vast Law. I bow to Kṛṣṇa who ordains. And having bowed to the brahmins, I will now declare the everlasting Laws. Hear from me, Yudhiṣṭhira, the Lawful Duties of kings in their entirety. Concentrate with attention as I explain them to you. And hear from me whatever else you like.

First of all, most prominent of the Kurus, only a king who wants to please the Gods and the brahmins may do it‡ properly. For a king discharges his debts of Law and is admired by the world only after he has worshiped the Gods and the brahmins, O prince who elevates the Kurus.

Yudhiṣṭhira my son, you should always commit yourself to making your own energetic efforts, for kings receive no extrahuman help° in
15 realizing their goals unless they make their own energetic efforts. These two things—extrahuman factors and energetic human effort—are part of all endeavors, but I think human effort is the more important of them. It is said that extrahuman agency must be determined by careful examination.

And when some undertaking has failed, you should not grieve: "Discipline§ prevails" is the highest policy of kings, son.

Kings have no basis for succeeding other than the highest Reality.

* = the three types or kinds of human action that pursue Merit *(dharma)*, Riches *(artha)*, and Love *(kāma)*.

† I use this whole phrase to translate *dharma* here; given the metaphors used, the particular royal actions intended here must be the administration of justice *(vyavahāra)* and punishment *(daṇḍa)*.

‡ = perform the Meritorious Acts that make up the dharma of a king.

§ = *vinaya*, strict adherence to the rules and norms one was taught.

A king impassioned with the highest Reality delights in this world and the next. O you Indra among kings, the highest Reality is the highest possession even of the seers; likewise a king has no other ground of confidence higher than the highest Reality.

The king who is endowed with good qualities and good character, who is self-controlled and gentle, who is Lawful, who has conquered his senses, and who is handsome and broad-minded never falls from Royal Splendor.

20 O joy of the Kurus, rely upon rectitude in all your undertakings by reconsidering your policies and by staying within the confines of the three Vedas.

The king who is always gentle will be ignored in all things. But the world trembles at a king who is harsh. So behave in both ways.

O best of generous givers, the seers must never be punished. This is the most important thing in the world, Bhārata; that is, the brahmins are.

The exalted Manu sang two stanzas about people's particular Laws—you should take both of them to heart, scion of Kuru.

> "Fire arose from water, the *kṣatra* from the *brahman*, metal from stone—the all-pervading energy of each is latent within each one's particular source.
>
> 25 "When metal strikes stone, or fire reaches water, or a kṣatriya is hostile to the *brahman*, then the three of them perish."

Realize this, great king, and then pay homage to the brahmins. Completely quiet within, the most excellent of the brahmins maintain the terrestrial *brahman*.*

And likewise, tiger, you should always use your arms to restrain those who might seem like brahmins, but who assault the system of the world. My son, the great seer Uśanas sang two stanzas long ago: Pay attention to them with concentrated mind, O king of great wisdom.

> "The king who heeds Law may, in fulfillment of his own Lawful Duty, resist even someone who is a master of the Vedas, should such a one raise a weapon against him in battle.
>
> 30 "He who preserves Law as another effaces it is the one who really knows Law; and he does not incur the sin of slaying a brahmin°—it is rage meeting with rage."

So the brahmins must be protected, O best of men, and the king should expel those who are scandalously deviant to a remote area of the kingdom. And, lord of peoples, he should have compassion for one† who has been

* = the Vedas. † = a brahmin.

accused; even for one accused of killing a brahmin, or of violating his teacher's bed, or of abortion. There is never a threat of bodily punishment for brahmins. They are to be expelled to a remote area of the kingdom, to a place the king despises.

Most excellent of men, you should always hold your people dear. Kings 35 have no other treasure superior to the aggregation of their people. Great king, of the six kinds of "fortress"° listed in the Learned Teachings, the "fortress" that consists of the people is regarded as extremely difficult to breach. So the wise king always shows sympathy to all the four Orders of society. The king who is dedicated to Law and speaks the truth at all times delights his subjects.°

But you must not be indulgent all the time, most excellent of men. A gentle king is not a Lawful king; he is like an elephant that is gentle. Pertinent stanzas were set forth long ago in the Learned Teaching of Bṛhaspati. Listen, great king, as I recite them.

> "A lowly person might humiliate a king who is always indulgent, like the elephant driver who will mount his elephant by climbing right up on its head.
>
> 40 "Therefore, a king must not be gentle all the time, he must also be harsh; like the splendid sun in springtime, he should be neither cool nor hot."

A king should thoroughly examine his own people and his enemies with direct observations, inferential reasoning, analogies, and direct testimony.

You should abandon all addictive pastimes. It is not that the king may not pursue them, but he must shun any attachment to them, O munificent bestower of presents upon priests. The king who indulges in addictive pastimes always comes to be despised in the world, and a king full of animosity makes the world tremble with fear.

A king should always follow the same rule* a pregnant woman does. 45 Hear the reason, great king, that makes this desirable. A pregnant woman forsakes the lover who pleases her heart and devotes herself to the welfare of her baby. Undoubtedly the king who follows the Laws should always do the same, O most splendid of the Kurus—renouncing his own pleasure, he should do whatever benefits the world.

You should never lose your serious bearing, Pāṇḍava—the commands of a man who is resolute and brandishes a stick are not opposed.

And you should never engage in jokes and pranks with your servants. O tiger, hear what is wrong with that. Subjects become contemptuous of

* = dharma.

their lord from hilarity. They do not stay in their proper positions, and they 50 disregard what he says. Dispatched on some job, they think it over and question it secretly. They ask for what they should not ask and eat what they should not eat. They get angry and flare up. And they assume his position. They corrupt royal offices with bribes and crooked schemes, and they enfeeble the realm with forgeries. They associate with the eunuchs guarding the women and come to dress like them. They break wind and spit in his presence, and shamelessly they mimic his words, O tiger among men. They mount the king's favorite horse or elephant or chariot without 55 any respect, when the king is cheerful and gentle. "You've done this badly, king," and "This was a bad move on your part," so they tell him, as if they were allies gathered for a council. When he is angry, they laugh, but when he honors them they feel no joy. They are always contending with each other over their own private matters. They betray secret plans and cover up wrongdoing. With disdain and mockery they execute the king's commands regarding his jewelry and his food, his bath and his unguents. When they listen to him, O tiger, they are breezy and at ease. They find fault with their responsibilities and abandon them, Bhārata. They are not satisfied with their wages, so they take from the king's grants. They want to play with the king as if he were a bird on a tether. "The king follows my lead," they say to people.

60 These and other wrongs crop up, Yudhiṣṭhira, when the king is cheery and full of gentleness.

Bhīṣma said:

57.1 A king must always exert himself strenuously, Yudhiṣṭhira. The king is not praised* when he is deficient in strenuous exertion, like a woman.

Lord Uśanas pronounced a stanza on this, king. Concentrate your mind and pay attention to me as I recite it.

> "The king who will not stand in opposition and the brahmin who will not travel from home, the earth swallows them up the way a snake swallows animals that live in burrows."

And you should take this to heart, tiger: Unite with those whom you 5 should join and oppose those whom you should oppose. Anyone who might work against you in the sevenfold kingdom must be opposed—even if it be your teacher or your friend. King Marutta sang this ancient stanza on the responsibilities of kingship; it is the thought of Bṛhaspati from long ago.

> "The king is required to get rid of anyone, even a teacher, who has gotten onto the way of error, who has become haughty and no longer recognizes what should and should not be done."

* Text note: See endnote at 57.1.

Seeking the welfare of his townsmen, the wise king Sagara, son of Bāhu, dismissed his eldest son Asamañjas.° Asamañjas had earlier had the children of those townsmen drowned in the Sarayu River, so his father censured him and banished him. And the seer Uddālaka dismissed his dear son, the great ascetic Śvetaketu, who treated brahmins improperly.°

In this the eternal Lawful Duty of kings is to delight their people, to guard the truth, and to preserve rectitude in public dealings. He should never harm the goods of others. He should have grants made at appropriate times.

The king who is bold, who tells the truth, and has forbearance does not stray off the path.

He should keep his counsel secret, have his anger under control, and he should have arrived at careful determinations of the meaning of the Learned Teachings. He should always be absorbed in the pursuit of Merit, Riches, Love, and Absolute Freedom.

The king's vulnerable openings should be covered with the three Vedas. There is nothing higher for kings than the hemming in of vice.

The king must guard the Laws of the Four Orders. The eternal Duty of kings is guarding against the mixing up of Laws.

The king should not be trustful, but he should not be too extremely distrustful. He should always use his powers of insight to evaluate strengths and weaknesses in terms of the six measures of foreign policy.° The king who sees his enemy's vulnerable openings is always praised; as is the king who knows the significance of each item in the Group of Three; as is the one who employs the stratagem of spies; as is the one who is passionately devoted to making acquisitions for his stores, like Yama and Vaiśravaṇa; as is the one who knows the group of ten° that are ever involved in stasis, increase, and diminution. He should be the supporter of those without support, and an attentive guardian of those who are supported. The king should have a bright face, and he should smile when addressing anyone. He should revere the aged; he should have suppressed all his lethargy and be free of obsessions; and he should always defer to the way of life of those who are strictly observant, for those pious, strictly observant people see the proper way to behave. He should never seize property from the hands of the strictly observant; rather, he should take it from those who are not strict and hand it over to the strict.

As he himself is the one who sends forth and takes back, he must have himself under control, and his agents and measures must be under control too. A man whose conduct has been purified, he gives at the right time and consumes at the right time. The king who is blessed with prosperity ought always to take as his aides valiant fighters who are devoted to him and incorruptible; men of good families who are free of disease; who have been educated and whose relatives were educated; who are proud but not disrespectful; who know Learned Teachings and the world, and keep an

eye to the worlds beyond; who are virtuous men, devoted to their Lawful Duties; who are as unshakable as the unshakable mountains. He should be equal with them in the luxuries they enjoy; he is superior to them by the authority of his royal parasol alone.

The king's activity should always be both obvious and obscure; acting this way, he will not come to distress. The perverse king who is overly suspicious of everyone, or the greedy king who takes everything, is quickly checked by his own people. But the honest king who is concerned to hold the hearts of his people is not swallowed up by his enemies when he falls; and having fallen, he stands firm again. The king who does not anger, who has no addictions, who is gentle with the rod of punishment, and who has conquered his senses is trusted by his subjects as if he were the Snowy Mountains.* He is wise and endowed with fitting virtues, stays focused upon the vulnerable openings of his enemies, looks favorably upon all the social Orders, knows good policy from bad, and is quick to act; high-minded, he controls his anger and is easily pleased; he is possessed of a nature that is free of disease, and is alert and active but not boastful.

The king who shows that he accepts responsibility for projects begun but not yet completed°—he is a king, the most excellent of kings.

He in whose realm people move about without fear—like children in their father's house—he is a king, the most excellent of kings.

He in whose country the townsmen and country folk know good policy from bad, and do not hide their wealth—he is a king, the most excellent of kings.

He in whose realm the citizens are devoted to their own particular work and are self-controlled and not caught up in quarrels; where they are watched over in accordance with the prescriptions; he in whose realm the people are docile, manageable, humble, and not habitually contentious; who take delight in offering gifts—he is a king.

He in whose realm there is no fraud, no cheating, no illusory magic, and no envy—he has Meritorious Law everlasting.

He who honors the different kinds of knowledge, who is willing to be guided, who is devoted to the welfare of his citizens, who conforms to the Law of the strictly observant, who is a man who gives things up—he is a king who deserves to rule.

He who uses spies, while his own secret counsels on what has been done and what not are not known to his enemies—he is a king who deserves to rule.

* = the Himālayas.

40 This stanza° was sung long ago by the exalted Bhārgava;* it relates to kings, as presented when the story of Rāma's life was told to you.†

> "Get a king first, then a wife, then wealth. If the world has no king how can one have a wife? How wealth?"

So, king, the lions who are kings have no other everlasting Meritorious Law than protection that is plain for all to see. Protection is the preservation of the world.

These two stanzas on the Lawful Duties of kings were cited by Manu, offspring of Prācetasa.‡ Listen to them with your mind focused.

> "A man should abandon these six as he would a leaking boat out on the ocean: A teacher who does not lecture, a priest who does not recite the 45 Vedas, a king who does not protect, a wife who does not speak sweetly, a cow herder who wants to be in the village, and a barber who wants to be in the forest."

Bhīṣma said:

58.1 Yudhiṣṭhira, the blessed Bṛhaspati praises this Duty§ and no other as the butter churned from the Laws for kings.

The great ascetic, the blessed, wide-eyed Kāvya,‖ the thousand eyed Great Indra, Manu offspring of Prācetasa, the blessed Bharadvāja, and the sage Gauraśiras, who all were supporters of brahmins, were *brahman*-reciting authors of Learned Teachings for kings. They proclaimed protection alone to be the Lawful Duty of kings, O best of those who support the Good Law. Listen to how it is accomplished, O king whose blue-5 lotus eyes are red: spies, spying, making gifts at appointed times, being free of envy, seizure only by proper means, never seizing by improper means, Yudhiṣṭhira, the propitiation of the pious, heroic boldness, quick wits, truthfulness, doing only what is for the good of his subjects, breaking enemy parties through straight and crooked means, never abandoning virtuous men, supporting those of good families, piling up stores of things that should be stored, service to those who are intelligent, arousing the strong, being attentive to his subjects, never flagging in his projects,

* = (probably) Śukra, also known as Kāvya Uśanas; see footnote at 12.58.2.

† When Kṛṣṇa (the ultimate source of Bhīṣma's knowledge here) recounted it to Yudhiṣṭhira in the journey recounted in *MBh* 12.48–50.

‡ = Manu, the son of Vivasvat, from whom the world's current kings all descended (see Chart 1 of Appendix 3), not Manu Svāyaṃbhuva, the creator and teacher of the "Laws of Manu."

§ = this dharma, namely, protecting his subjects, *rakṣā*.

‖ = seer who advised and served the Asuras; thus, the counterpart of Bṛhaspati, the seer who advised and served the Gods. Kāvya Uśanas was the son of Brahmā's son Bhṛgu as Bṛhaspati was the son of Brahmā's son Aṅgiras; both are famous in the *MBh* as sources of wisdom for ruling.

augmenting the treasury, guarding the city, constant suspicion, breaking up the conflicts between citizens, attention to houses that are old and those 10 that are collapsing; the use of both kinds of punishment,° as prompted by the situation; paying attention to enemies, neutrals, and allies; wooing his retainers away from looking toward his enemies; always being suspicious for his own part, while being assured toward his enemies; always following the rules of wise policy, always making energetic efforts on his own behalf, never underestimating his enemies, always avoiding what is ignoble.

Pay attention to these stanzas where Bṛhaspati has declared that the kings' own energetic efforts are the foundation of their performance of their Meritorious, Lawful Duties.

> "The nectar was gained through energetic effort, and the Asuras were killed through energetic effort. Great Indra gained his preeminence in heaven through energetic effort.

> 15 "The man who is adept in making energetic efforts stands above those who are skilled in speech. Those skillful with speech wait upon and entertain the man who is adept at energetic effort.

> "The king who is deficient in making energetic efforts, even if he is keenly intelligent, is constantly subject to his enemies' assaults, like a serpent that has no venom."

An enemy should not be underestimated, not even a weak enemy by his stronger rival; even a little fire burns, and just a little poison kills. An enemy who has only cavalry, but who is ensconced in a fort, can plague the country of a rich and mighty king, first here, then there.

When the king says things in secret,° when he restrains his people for the sake of gaining victory, when there may be guile in his heart, when 20 he may be a certain way for the sake of some cause, when he has some devious project, it is supported by his rectitude. He may perform the most Meritorious rite in order to deceive people.

A kingdom is a tremendous organization which is very difficult to support for an unsophisticated man. It is the worst scene of slaughter that there is, and a gentle man cannot bear it. The kingdom—the whole pretty piece of it°—is supported constantly by rectitude. Therefore, Yudhiṣṭhira, you must always behave in a mixed way. Even when the king suffers setbacks while protecting his subjects, he still has a large Duty to perform—so it is kings have acted.

So this little bit of the Lawful Duties of kings has been sketched out for you. Tell me what further doubts you have, O best of speakers.

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

25 The blessed Vyāsa and Devasthāna with Aśman, and Vāsudeva, Kṛpa, Sātyaki, and Saṃjaya—their faces like flowers in bloom—full of joy,

praised that tiger among men, Bhīṣma, best of the supporters of the Good Law, shouting "Bravo! Bravo!"

Then that best of the Kurus—heavy with sadness, his eyes filled with tears—said to Bhīṣma, as gently he touched his feet, "I will ask you about my problem tomorrow, grandfather. The sun, having drunk the earth's juice, is going home."

> * Keśava, Kṛpa, Yudhiṣṭhira, and the rest took leave of the brahmins, circled rightwards round the son of the great river,† and, filled with joy, mounted their chariots.
>
> 30 Faithfully observant of their vows, these fierce warriors plunged into the Dṛṣadvatī and completed their water-rites. They sat in the twilight, reciting prayers of good fortune in accordance with prescriptions. Then they entered the City of the Elephant.‡

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

59.1 The Pāṇḍavas and Yādavas arose at daybreak, and after performing their morning rituals, they set out for the Field of Kuru in chariots that looked like cities. When they got there they went over to the faultless Bhīṣma and asked Gaṅgā's son, that best of chariot-warriors, if he had spent the night comfortably. They then greeted Vyāsa and the other seers, and after those seers greeted them, they sat down near Bhīṣma in a complete circle around him.

The tremendously brilliant king, Yudhiṣṭhira, the King of Law, then paid his respects to Bhīṣma and greeted him. Then, his hands joined 5 respectfully, he said to him, "Bhārata, this word 'king' that goes around,° tell me where it comes from, grandfather. How is it one man stands over other men of preeminent understanding, and men who are mighty warriors, when he has the same hands, head, and neck, the same senses? When he experiences the same pleasures and pains; has the same back, arms, and belly, same semen, bones, and marrow, the same flesh and blood; when he breathes in and out just the same? Whose life-breaths and body are the same; who experiences birth and death the same; who is the same in all the attributes of men? How is it one man protects the entire earth that teems with strong men, mighty warriors, and nobles? And how 10 is it the whole world wants to please this one man? For when this one man is pleased, the entire world is pleased—and when he is in turmoil, the whole world is in turmoil, that's a fact.

"I want to hear all this as it really is, O bull of the Bharatas, so tell me

* Two classical jagatī triṣṭubh stanzas.
† = Bhīṣma, the son of the river Gaṅgā.
‡ = Gajasāhvaya, that is, Hāstinapura.

this with perfect accuracy, most eloquent of speakers. Surely, the reason the whole world bows down to a single man as to a God can be no trifle."

Bhīṣma said:

Pay attention, most fortunate of men, and hear this whole thing, missing nothing—how kingship arose in the beginning, in the Kṛta Age. There was no government and no king; no rod of force, and no one to wield the rod. All creatures guarded each other in accordance with Law. 15 As men guarded each other in accordance with Law, Bhārata, they became extremely weary, and then error and confusion overcame them. Men became dominated by error and confusion, O bull among men, and from the confounding of their knowledge, their performance of Meritorious, Lawful Deeds ceased. After their knowledge disappeared, dominated by error and confusion, all men came to be dominated by greed, O best of the Bhāratas. Then, as men came into contact with things they did not own, desire ended up their main concern,° lord. Then, after they had come under the sway of desire, passion came upon them. Filled with passion, Yudhiṣṭhira, they no longer took cognizance of what should be 20 done and what not, nor of the women they should not approach for sex, nor of what should and should not be said, what should and should not be eaten, what is and is not a fault, and, O Indra among kings, they did not forsake what should be forsaken. Then, when the world of men was completely disordered, the *brahman** vanished. And because the *brahman* disappeared, king, the Good Law vanished.

When the *brahman* and Law had disappeared, the Gods were terrified, O tiger among men, and they took refuge with Brahmā. When they reached the blessed one, the grandfather of the world, they all folded their hands in respectful supplication, and full of misery, grief, and fear, they said to him, "Blessed one, the everlasting *brahman* that was there in the world of men has vanished because greed and confusion now fill their minds. Fear has 25 come upon us. And lord, when the *brahman* disappeared, Law disappeared. So, lord of the three worlds, we have become the same as mortals. We used to shower things down upon them, and mortals would send things up to us; but since they have stopped their rites, we are now in danger. Think of what would be best for us, grandfather. Our majesty, which gives rise to your majesty, is disappearing."

The blessed one, the Self-Arisen One, then said to all those Gods, "I shall think about what is best. Your fear be gone, O bulls among the Gods."

He then composed, out of his own mind, a hundred thousand lessons describing Law, Profit, and Love.

> 30 "This set was called the Group of Three by the Self-Arisen One. And there is a fourth distinct general motive of life, Absolute Freedom,

* = the Vedas.

which forms a separate category. Another group of three is declared in connection with Absolute Freedom: Lightness, Energy, and Darkness. Stasis, increase, and diminution form a group of three that springs from use of the rod of force. Self, place and time, means, assistants, and performing the deed are taught in it as the group of six pertaining to good policy; and there is also one's goal."°

The general sciences that are described in this work, O bull of the Bharatas, are the three Vedas, intellectual analysis, economic productivity, and the policy for using the rod of force.° Also set forth in it is setting a watch to protect oneself against one's ministers,° protecting oneself against the royal heir, spies using various devices, and another, distinctive kind of
35 intelligence-gathering. The conciliation of adversaries, giving gifts, dividing one's adversaries, the use of force, and, fifthly, forbearance have been completely declared in it, O Pāṇḍava. The whole of secret counsel has been described in it, and the matter of dividing one's enemies too; and the failure of secret counsel, and the consequences of succeeding and failing to achieve one's goal. Alliances—which are labeled variously "deficient," "middling," and "highest," and which are classified in terms of "fear," "hospitality," and "wealth"—have been completely described. In it too are the four times for military expeditions, and elaboration of the Group of Three. Likewise conquest that is Meritorious and Lawful, conquest that is pragmatic and profitable, and conquest that is demonic° are completely described. A threefold characterization of the group of five° has been given in it.
40 Violence, both manifest and covert, is discussed. Manifest violence is eightfold, while covert violence is very extensive. Battalions of chariots, elephants, horses, and infantry, as well as slaves, ships, spies, and, eighth, guides to the way, Pāṇḍava: these are the manifest elements of force, Kaurava. And compounds that operate on contact or in food, such as poison from living and nonliving sources, are taught as the varied covert side of force.

The ally, the enemy, and the neutral king° have been described; also, all the features of roadways and of different terrains; protection of oneself,
45 refreshing oneself,° watching out for spies, various formations of infantry, elephants, chariots, and cavalry, battle-arrangements with their diverse labels, and a wide range of practical techniques for war. And portents, accidents, waging war well, protecting one's subjects well, and the science of quenching the blades of weapons,° are treated here, O bull of the Bharatas. The calamities of armies° are stated, and the rousing of armies, the times for squeezing one's enemy and for attacking, and the times of danger, Pāṇḍava. Likewise the placement of trenches and the utilization of ploys. There is also the squeezing of the enemy's country with fierce armies of bandits and forest-tribals, or with fire-starters, prisoners, and spies in disguise; or by the conspiratorial wooing of the enemy's leading citizens,

50 or of his guilds; or by cutting his vegetation, by ruining his elephants, by sowing suspicion, by besieging those loyal to him, or by gaining control of the roads. Also described in it is what is conducive to the shrinking or swelling of the seven-membered kingdom; use of the powers of envoys, and the improvement of the country are in it. The whole range of enemies, neutrals, and allies is fully stated. And grinding down and warding off more powerful enemies, supersecret dealings, the smoothing out of annoyances; inner quiet, physical training of the body, the discipline of yoga meditation; and the accumulation of material goods.

There is also supporting those who are dependent and looking out for those whom one supports. Making gifts at the times that call for wealth,
55 and not being addicted to one's pastimes are in it. Likewise the virtues of a king, and the virtues of a general; and the virtues and faults of agents and their putting plans into action, and the various indications that someone is corrupt, and the subsistence of one's dependents. There is also being suspicious of everything, avoiding negligence, seeking to gain what one does not have, increasing what one does have, and giving away the increase to worthy recipients in accordance with the prescriptions. Described in this work is the dispensing of Riches for the sake of Merit, or for the sake of Riches, or on account of Love; there is also a fourth one that counters addiction.* Ten terrific vices that arise from anger or from desire
60 are described there, O best of the Kurus: Hunting, dicing, drinking, and women are the vices teachers say arise from desire, and the Self-Arisen One has declared them here, along with harshness of speech, violence, harshness of punishment, masochism, suicide,° and the ruining of one's riches.†

Various machines and their functionings are detailed; so too the grinding down and warding off of one's enemies, the smashing of settlements, the shattering of tree sanctuaries, and destroying dikes and factories. Fanning out,° marching, and lying in wait are described, as are the procuring of cymbals,° large war-drums, conch-shell horns, kettle drums, and supplies, and the weak points of the enemy—these six, O best of warriors.
65 There is also the pacifying of newly acquired realms and the honoring of those in them who are strictly observant, arriving at a mutual understanding with the learned, and becoming learned in the prescriptions for the offerings at daybreak. And there is the touching of auspicious things, and bodily remedies, the preparation of food, constant adherence to Brahminic piety,° how one should exert himself energetically even when alone, truthfulness, sweet words, and the rituals of the festivals of different

* That is, there is a fourth motive for dispensing wealth, *mokṣa*, which militates against attachment.

† = the six vices arising from anger.

associations of people in their particular settlements. Also, public and secret activity in all administrative departments are treated, and constant scrutiny is recommended, O tiger of the Bharatas.

The nonpunishment of brahmins, the appropriate application of punishment, and preservation of the good qualities of one's dependents from those not of their kind is treated; so too the protection of one's townspeople, the enhancement of one's own country, and the concern for the twelve kings that stand in the alliances.°*

The Self-Arisen One declared the theory of the seventy–two,† and the Laws of lands, peoples, and clans were detailed. Law, Profit, Love, and Absolute Freedom were detailed. The acquisition of Riches and the means for acquiring them; various rites accompanied by abundant presents; the performance of rites that strike at another's base,° ploys making use of illusion,‡ and the ruination of streams and tanks were described there.

Any and every means to prevent the world from deviating from the noble way were detailed in this Teaching of Policy.

After he completed this wonderful Teaching, the sovereign lord was thrilled, and he said to all the Gods who were led by Indra, "This wisdom, this butter of Sarasvatī's,§ has been produced in order to help the world, to establish firmly the Group of Three. Coupled with the rod of force and affording protection to the world, dedicated to restraining the bad and favoring the good, it will move along through all the populated realms. It will be led by the rod of force, and it will lead the rod of force. Declared as "the policy for the application of the royal rod of force," it moves through all three worlds. This wisdom, which is the abiding essence of the virtue of the six measures of foreign policy,‖ will stand in the forefront among exalted men. The excellent character of this policy will be plain for all to see because the rod of force is so great."

Described in here are the wide occurrence of prudent behavior (which is spread over the whole world), the tradition of the Purāṇas, the origination of the great seers, the list of holy bathing sites, and the list of the lunar constellations, Yudhiṣṭhira; also the whole system of the four religious Patterns of Life, and all the sacrifices requiring four priests, the system of the four social Orders, and the foursome of the Vedas. The Histories, the secondary Vedas, and the whole of right thinking are here described. Asceticism, Knowledge, doing no injury, the highest policy regarding the

* = four natural alliances, or "circles" *(maṇḍalas)* of kings; see endnote at 59.70.

† = the seventy-two constituent elements *(prakṛti-s)* bearing upon relations among neighboring kings; see endnote at 59.71.

‡ Text note: See endnote at 59.73b.

§ Butter is *navanītam,* punning on the phrase *navanīti,* "the new (statement of) policy," that is implicit in the passage; Sarasvatī, the sacred river, a kind of mother Goddess of seers, is the Goddess of Wisdom and Speech and the daughter of the Self-Arisen One.

‖ See 12.57.16 and endnote at 57.16.

Real and the unreal, serving the elderly, generous giving, cleanliness, energetic effort, and sympathy for all beings—all that has been detailed in here. O Pāṇḍava, there is no doubt that everything on earth that exists in words has been entered here in this Teaching of the Grandfather. Law, Riches, Love, and Absolute Freedom have all been discussed in here.

The blessed Śaṃkara—the Multiform, Far-seeing Śiva, Sthāṇu, husband of Umā—then took up this ancient teaching of policy. Understanding the diminution of the length of life in the different eras of the cosmos, the blessed Śiva abridged the tremendously useful Guidebook Brahmā had composed. After doing great asceticism, Indra, that great supporter of brahmins, received the ten thousand lessons of what was now called the *Teaching of the God of Far-seeing Eyes.** That blessed one, the Sacker of Cities, abridged the teaching into five thousand lessons, and it was called *Bāhudantaka.* The lord Bṛhaspati abridged it with keen understanding into three thousand lessons, and that was called the *Teaching of Bṛhaspati.* Kāvya,† the great ascetic teacher of strategy whose wisdom was immeasurable, abridged the Guidebook to one thousand lessons. So this Guidebook has been abridged by great seers out of consideration for the world, as they realized that the lifetime of mortals had been shortened, O Pāṇḍava.

Now once the Gods joined together and said to the Progenitor Viṣṇu, "Designate the one who is worthy to be superior to other mortals."

The blessed one, the lord God Nārāyaṇa,‡ thought deeply and created from his mind a son of dazzling fiery energy, Virajas.° But, O illustrious Pāṇḍava, Virajas did not want to be a lord upon the earth; his mind was inclined toward renunciation. His son was Kīrtiman, but he too looked beyond the five elements of the physical world. That one's son was Kardama, and he too heated up great ascetic heat. Anaṅga was the son of the Progenitor Kardama. He was a righteous protector of his subjects and an expert in the policy for administering the rod of force. Anaṅga's son Atibala studied and became adept in governing and succeeded to the rule of the earth, but he was dominated by his senses. The mind-born daughter of Death, Sunīthā, widely known throughout the three worlds, gave birth to Vena. But he was dominated by passion and hatred, and behaved Unlawfully toward his subjects, so the seers who uttered the *brahman* killed him with stalks of *kuśa* grass purified with their spells. The seers then churned his right thigh with spells, and out of it, there on the ground, was born an ugly little man. He had red eyes and black hair, and looked like a charred post. "Stay down!"§ those *brahman*-speaking seers said to him. And so there came into being the awful Niṣādas, who took to the

* A reference to Śiva. † See the footnote above at 12.58.2.

‡ = Viṣṇu. § = *niṣīda.*

mountains and forests, and those other barbarians who dwell in the Vindhya mountains by the hundreds of thousands.

The great seers then churned his right hand, and from that came a man who looked like another Indra.° He wore armor, had a sword strapped on, and had a bow and arrows. He knew the Vedas and their auxiliary texts, and was a master of the Veda of the Bow. The entire policy for administering the rod of force had lodged in this best of men, king. Then this son of Vena, his hands joined in humility, said to those great seers, "A highly refined mind that apprehends Law and Profit has developed within me. What should I do with it? Tell me truly. I shall do without hesitation any significant task you good men tell me to do."

The Gods and the highest seers said to him, "Do without hesitation whatever is Law, having restrained yourself°—having forsaken your likes and dislikes, acting the same toward every person, having put desire and anger and greed and pride far off and away. Keeping Law in view at all times, you must restrain forcibly any man in the world who strays from Law. In thought, deed, and word rise up repeatedly to the promise 'I shall guard the terrestrial *brahman.* Whatever here is declared in the policy for administering Law, or is based on the policy for the application of the royal rod of force, that I shall do without hesitation; I will never just follow my own will. And I shall never punish the brahmins.' And, promise, lord, 'I will save the world from the complete blending together of different kinds of people.' "°

Vena's son then replied to the Gods, who were there with the seers, "If the brahmins will be my assistants, O bulls among the Gods, then so be it."

Those *brahman*-speakers said to him, "Let it be so."

Śukra,* a storehouse of the *brahman,* became his official ritual priest. The Vālakhilyas became his ministers, the Sārasvatyas his retinue. The great seer, the blessed Garga, became his keeper of the year, his almanac maker.

Among men there is this high statement from Holy Learning, "He is himself the eighth." † And two bards arose, who were the first *sūta* and the first *māgadha.*

He made the earth perfectly level; we learned there had been a great unevenness of the earth.

He was given the royal consecration for the protection of creatures by the God Viṣṇu, by Indra and the Gods, by the seers, and by Brahmā. Then, in person, the Earth took precious stones and presented them to him, Pāṇḍava. Ocean, who is the lord and husband of the rivers, and the Snowy Mountains, which are the highest of mountains, and Indra presented him with inexhaustible riches, Yudhiṣṭhira. The golden mountain himself,

* = Kāvya Uśanas; see footnote at 12.58.2.

† Vena's son (Pṛthu) is the eighth in the series Viṣṇu, Virajas, Kīrtiman, Kardama, Anaṅga, Atibala, Vena, Pṛthu.

Great Meru, gave him a golden ornament. Lord Naravāhana,* the lord of the Yakṣas and Rākṣasas, gave him wealth sufficient to pursue Law, Riches, and Love. O Pāṇḍava, horses, chariots, elephants, and people by the millions appeared simply at Vena's son's thinking of them. There were no diseases, nor any old age, nor famines, nor anxieties. Because of the protection that king provided, there was never any fear of stealthy thieves, nor did one person fear another. Milked by him, the earth yielded seventeen kinds of grain, and it yielded to anyone at all those things beloved by Yakṣas, Rākṣasas, and Nāgas. That exalted king made Law supreme in the world.

The creatures subject to him were delighted by him,† so they used the word "king"‡ for him.

The word "kṣatriya" is used because of "saving the brahmins from harm." §

And good men teach that this earth‖ is "spread out" with riches.#

And, prince, the everlasting Viṣṇu himself established the rule, "No one shall surpass you, king." Through the power of his inner heat, the blessed Viṣṇu entered into the king, so the world would bow down to these human Gods as if they were Gods, king. O lord of men, no one ever assails the kingdom that is always protected by the policy for using the royal rod of force; and there is the same result from the king's keeping a sharp watch through continuous spying.

For what reason, other than his having some divine attribute, should the world stand within the control of a king who is the same as all others in himself and in his faculties?

At this time a golden lotus grew from the forehead of Viṣṇu, and it turned into the Goddess Śrī, Royal Splendor, the wife of wise Dharma.** From Śrī, Wealth arose with the help of Dharma. Now Law, Riches, and Śrī are firmly established on the foundation of kingship.

Having descended to earth from heaven at the exhaustion of his good deeds, son, he is born a king who follows the policy for the administration of the rod of force. Because he is joined to the greatness of Viṣṇu, this man on the earth comes to be endowed with wisdom and rises to exaltation. Now no one transgresses any ordinance of the Gods: Everyone stands within the control of this one man, if that man conforms. The good action of this one man, who is the equal of others, in whose command this world stands, tends toward goodness. Whoever sees his face, my dear, becomes subject to his will, for one sees an auspicious, purposeful, beautiful face. So, lord of kings, wise men in the world always say that the Gods and the human Gods are equal, O lord of peoples.

* = Kubera. † = *rañjita,* from √*rañj.* ‡ = *rājā.*
§ = *kṣata–trāṇa.* ‖ = *pṛthivī.* # = *prathitā dhanataḥ.*
** = the Meritorious, Good Law personified as a God.

All this° concerning the greatness of kings has been explained to you completely, O best of the Bharatas. What else should happen here?

(84f) Permitted and Prohibited Occupations and Life-Patterns and the King's Responsibility to Enforce These

12.60–66 (B. 60–66; C. 2268–2494)

60 (60; 2268). Yudhiṣṭhira asks about the Laws of the four Orders of society and the four religious Patterns of Life as well as about the Law for kings; he also asks practical questions about the welfare of kings and kingdoms. Bhīṣma makes a new beginning to the instruction (1–5). He lists certain virtues and obligations that apply to all four of the social Orders (5). He then describes the Lawful way of life proper to brahmins, emphasizing the sharing of any wealth (5–10). He does the same for kṣatriyas, emphasizing the importance of making war for the securing of prosperity (10–20). He does the same for vaiśyas, emphasizing their responsibility for animals. He specifies a vaiśya's wages (20–25). He describes the Lawful way of life of a śūdra, emphasizing the stipulation that śūdras have no property. He specifies the wages of śūdras as hand-me-downs and gifts from the twice-born. Needy śūdras are to be employed or supported, and śūdras must support their masters in the latters' crises (25–35).

Bhīṣma praises sacrificial worship and instructs Yudhiṣṭhira that all the Orders of society (including śūdras, with some important differences) can and do worship with sacrificial rites. Trusting Surrender (śraddhā) *is the divine reality at the heart of all the different sacrifices performed in the world, and all the different sacrificial offerings of all four Orders are fused together in the sacrificial worship the brahmins do (35–50).*

61 (61; 2324). The four religious Patterns of Life: After being initiated as a twice-born and completing all the obligations of being a householder, one may leave home and

become a forest-ascetic, with one's wife or without her, and eventually become identical with the Everlasting (1–5). Brahmins may pursue Absolute Freedom in the life of begging immediately after celibate studentship, without ever marrying or establishing fires. This too leads to identity with the Everlasting (5). Bhīṣma next describes an exalted form of householder life known to sages (munis) *and characterized by various ascetic attitudes. The brahmin who lives this most excellent of the Life-Patterns perfectly cleanses the householding life and enjoys its cleansed benefits in heaven (10–15). Next Bhīṣma describes some of the vows that mark the life of the celibate student (15–20).*

62 (62; 2345). Yudhiṣṭhira asks about the irenic and productive deeds of brahmins. Bhīṣma begins his response by emphatically excluding brahmins from the work of kṣatriyas. He condemns brahmins doing the work of the other Orders, praises the ideal of a brahmin doing the deeds prescribed for brahmins in all four of the Life-Patterns, and praises the value of their recitation of the Veda (1–5). Bhīṣma closes by describing the inexorable activity of Time (10).

63 (63; 2356). Bhīṣma lists occupations and situations forbidden to brahmins. Deviant brahmins are the equivalent of śūdras, or wild barbarians, and should be treated accordingly (1–5). He outlines true brahmin virtues and ideals (all the Life-Patterns are prescribed for them), and the value of the four social Orders, the Vedas, and the four Life-Patterns for all peoples (5–10). How the non-brahmin Orders of society may enter the Life-Patterns. Śūdras may observe all but the Pattern of renunciation, and so too vaiśyas and kṣatriyas (10). But the king may permit a qualified vaiśya to go through the whole cycle of Life-Patterns, and a virtuous king may go through all four of them as well and become a royal seer (10–20). The Vedas declare that the Law of kings is the basis of all the Laws of society. Because so many lesser Laws depend upon it, the Law of the king is paramount (20–30).

64 (64; 2386). The Laws of the Life-Patterns and the Laws of different social Orders are based upon the Law of kṣatra *(1). Bhīṣma reviews different theories of Law (1–5). He reminds Yudhiṣṭhira how once in the past many kings went to Viṣṇu for the policy on the use of force, and then he relates a story about King Māndhātar (5–10). During a sacrifice, Māndhātar worshiped Viṣṇu with a desire to see the God. Viṣṇu appeared to Māndhātar as Indra and told the king it*

was impossible to see the Lord Nārāyaṇa. The God offered to grant any other wish of Māndhātar's (10–15). Māndhātar said he wished to enter the forest, as he did not know how to carry out the Law of kṣatra. *Indra told him that the Law of the kṣatriyas is the oldest Law, emanating from the first God, and that all other Laws are subsequent to it. Viṣṇu himself used it in the past to eliminate the enemies of Gods, brahmins, Vedas, and Law (15–25).*

65 (65; 2417). Indra (Viṣṇu) continued praising and describing the kṣatriya Law and its primacy (1–5). The king should see to it that brahmins follow only the Law of the Vedas and the four Life-Patterns (5–10). The kṣatriyas must keep all four Orders doing their proper Lawful Duties (10). Māndhātar asked how a king can apply Law to all the different kinds of people (many of whom are barbarians) that live within his kingdom (10–15). Indra responded that the barbarians in the kingdom are subject to various aspects of Law that are based on the Vedas (15–20). Māndhātar noted that barbarians are observed in all four of the social Orders and Life-Patterns. Indra said social confusion results from the disappearance of the policy of punishment, and that evil is averted when the king employs punishment. The king is a God and the supreme teacher of the world. The kṣatriyas are necessary for people to be able to know and perform their Meritorious Lawful Deeds (20–30). Viṣṇu then returned to his undecaying abode. Bhīṣma tells Yudhiṣṭhira that he should set creatures moving on the ancient wheel of Meritorious Lawful Deeds (30–35).

66 (66; 2452). Yudhiṣṭhira asks Bhīṣma for a fuller accounting of the four religious Patterns of Life. Bhīṣma will explain it with regard to its different outward appearances (1). Bhīṣma claims that the essence of the four Life-Patterns is found in the normal activities of the virtuous, and he then surveys various activities of a king, claiming for each that it is the same as the king's being in this or that Life-Pattern (1–15). He then praises various forms of virtuous behavior generally as tantamount to being in one or another of the Life-Patterns, or in all of them simultaneously (20–25). The king and his assistants gain portions of the Merit or the evil of his subjects (25). Bhīṣma follows these points with several points praising the high good that can result from doing one's worldly duty, concluding with exhortations to Yudhiṣṭhira to perform his kingly duties diligently (30–35).

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

60.1 Once again Yudhiṣṭhira saluted his grandfather, the son of the Gaṅgā, with his hands folded in respect. He then composed himself and asked him, "What are the Laws of all the social Orders? What are the Laws of each Order in the System of the Four Orders? And what are they for the four religious Patterns of Life? And what are held to be the Laws for kings?

"How does a kingdom prosper? How does the king thrive? How do the townspeople and the king's retainers prosper, O bull of the Bharatas? What sort of treasury, army, fort, allies, and ministers should a king avoid? 5 Likewise, what sort of priests, chaplains, and teachers? What people should kings trust when there is some sort of crisis? And how does a king keep himself secure? Tell me this, grandfather."

Bhīṣma said:

I bow to vast Law. I bow to Kṛṣṇa who ordains. And having bowed to the brahmins, I will now declare the everlasting Laws.

Nine things apply to all the social Orders: Not being quick to anger, speaking the truth, sharing, patience, begetting offspring on one's wife, cleanliness, benevolence, rectitude, and supporting one's dependents.

Now I will tell you the Law that is for brahmins exclusively. Great king, they say self-control is the most ancient Law. Also recitation of the Vedas and teaching the Vedas, for ritual action is accomplished on the basis of 10 them. If wealth should come to a man who lives by doing the work that is appropriate to him and does no work that is wrong for him—a man who is calm within and contented with wisdom—then he ought to extend his line through offspring, give generous grants, and worship with sacrificial rites. For it is prescribed that wealth is to be utilized by sharing it with the pious, strictly observant people.

But a brahmin has fully accomplished his duties just by recitation of the Vedas. He may do something more, or he may not. The brahmin is said to be connected with Mitra.

Now I will tell you, Bhārata, the Law that is for kṣatriyas. The king should bestow gifts, but he should never ask for anything. He should worship with sacrifices, but he may not officiate at the sacrifices of others. He may not teach the Vedas, but he should recite them. He should watch over his creatures protectively. He should constantly exert himself to kill 15 barbarians,° and in battle he should act with bold courage. Those kings well versed in Holy Learning who worship with sacrificial rites, who win victories in battle—they are the best winners of heavenly worlds.

Those familiar with ancient times do not praise the deeds of a kṣatriya who withdraws from battle when his body has not been badly wounded. They say the Law of kṣatriyas is primarily killing. He has no more important duty than the destruction of barbarians.

Giving grants, study, sacrificial worship, the acquisition of goods, and their preservation are enjoined upon him; therefore, the king in particular

must make war if he wants to gain the Merit of Lawful Deeds. Having fixed all his subjects in their proper Lawful Deeds, the king must make them perform all their duties in accordance with Law, all with equal priority.

20 The king has fully accomplished his duties by protecting his subjects. He may do something more, or he may not. The kṣatriya is said to be connected with Indra.

Now I will tell you, Bhārata, the Law that is for vaiśyas. Generous giving, recitation of the Vedas, ritual worship, the accumulation of wealth in honest ways. A vaiśya should carefully protect all animals like a father. Any other kind of work he might perform would be wrong work. By protecting them he would gain great ease. After creating animals the Progenitor bestowed them on the vaiśya; he bestowed all creatures on the brahmin and the kṣatriya.

I will tell you the vaiśya's wage and means of livelihood.

He may have the milk of one cow out of six; and out of a hundred cattle, 25 he may take one breeding pair. Of dead cattle a seventh part is his, likewise of horn, and of hoof a sixteenth part. A seventh part° of all the seeds of the grain crop are his. This is his maintenance for the year.

A vaiśya should never have the wish not to tend animals. As long as the vaiśya is willing, animals must never ever be tended by anyone else.

Now I will tell you, Bhārata, the Law that is for śūdras. The Progenitor fashioned the śūdra as the servant of the Orders of society, so serving those Orders is prescribed for the śūdra. The śūdra should gain great happiness from obedience to them. The śūdra should serve the three Orders without resentment.

30 The śūdra should never, ever, accumulate anything.° A wicked śūdra who acquired wealth would place his betters under his control. But a virtuous śūdra may have accumulations if he wishes, when the king has given permission.

I will tell you the śūdra's wage and means of livelihood.

It is decreed that the Orders of society are required to support the śūdra. As parasols, turban-cloths, chowries, sandals, and fans wear out,° their owners should pass them on to the śūdras who serve them. Worn-out clothes are unfit for twice-born Orders to wear and they are ordained for the śūdra; indeed they are his wealth by Law.

The men who know Law say that when an obedient śūdra comes to any of twice-born, work should be arranged for him. Food is to be given to one 35 who is loyal. The elderly and the weak are to be supported. A śūdra must never abandon his master in any crisis. He must support his master with any extra he has, should his master's substance be exhausted. For a śūdra has nothing of his own; his possessions may be taken by his master.

The sacrificial rites of worship carried out with the Triple Learning*

* = the Vedas.

have been prescribed for the three Orders, Bhārata.* "Svāhā" and "Namas" are the ritual formulas ordained for śūdras.° Using these two formulas, a śūdra who is observant of pious practices might perform worship for himself with the cooking offerings.° They say the present for a priest for this cooked sacrificial offering is a pot full of rice.° We have heard that a śūdra named Paijavana° gave a hundred thousand by the Indra-Agni Rule.° So worship with Munificent, Trusting Surrender° is actually prescribed for all four of the Orders of society; for Trusting Surrender is a great deity, and it is a purifier of those who offer sacrificial worship.°

40 The seers† worshiped the supreme deity, each one alone, and also together in common, with everlasting communal sacrificial sessions° undertaken for various wishes. Any offerings made among the three Orders° are commingled with those of the brahmins: What these men—who are the Gods even of the Gods—utter is final. Therefore all sacrificial rites done by any of the Orders are commingled, and this is not as a result of anyone's desires.

(The brahmin who knows the *ṛc* verses, the *yajus* formulas, or the *sāman* melodies° should always be honored like a God; one who does not know *ṛc*, *yajus*, or *sāman* is an outrage to the Progenitor.)

Bhārata, my son, sacrificial worship occurs among all the Orders in intention.° The Gods make no efforts on behalf of anyone who militates against sacrificial worship,° nor do other people. Therefore, sacrificial worship imbued with Trusting Surrender is prescribed for all the Orders.

‡ The brahmins would worship their own deity° in their own way as they offered sacrifices for the other Orders—so it was.

"This Rule extending so far will be gratifying for us: What is offered among any of the three Orders° is offered by the brahmin."

45 Through this the Orders of society become straight; their various Rites, deriving from their separate origins, are fused together—this is the consequence of it.

The *sāman* is one, the *yajus* is one, the *ṛc* is one; amidst these, the brahmin is seen obviously° to be one too.°

* The section from 12.60.36–52 is a difficult and important passage; see the endnotes.
† = brahmins, or the ancient ancestors of the brahmins.
‡ Text note: See the first endnote at 60.44. We have here two Vedic-style triṣṭubhs; as each half stanza seems to convey a distinct point, I have divided each of these two triṣṭubhs into two halves.

On this, those who know the ancient times recite verses that were sung at sacrificial rites of the Vaikhānasa sages, who favored the offering of sacrificial worship.

"Either after the sun has risen or before it has risen, a man, his senses under control, should pour offerings onto the fire in accordance with Law in a spirit of Trusting Surrender.* Trusting Surrender is the universal agency.°

"The earlier form† is 'what was spilled';‡ its later form is the restored, 'unspilled,' offering.° Many are the forms of the sacrificial rites, and many are the benefits of the various rituals.

"The twice-born man who completely comprehends them,§ whose certainty is based on the determinations of insightful understanding, who is infused with Trusting Surrender—that man is worthy to offer sacrificial worship.

50 "Whether one is a thief, a wicked man, or the most wicked of the wicked, if he favors offering sacrificial worship, he is a virtuous man, they say. The seers praise him, and undoubtedly it is right.

"By all means all the Orders should offer sacrificial worship, that is a certainty, for nothing known in the three worlds is the equal of sacrificial worship.

"So they say a man should offer sacrificial worship without resentment, being as intently devoted as he is able, relying upon his spirit of Trusting Surrender to be a purifier."

Bhīṣma said:

61.1 O great-armed Yudhiṣṭhira, who are truly brave, hear the works of the four Patterns of Life and of the four Orders of society. They say withdrawal to the forest, living by begging, the great Life-Pattern of Householding, and fourth, the Life-Pattern of celibate studentship are favored by brahmins.

After becoming "twice-born" by performing the life-cycle ritual of the hair-braiding,‖ after accomplishing the rites of installing the ritual fire and so on, and after studying the Veda; being fully self-possessed, having restrained his senses, and having finished what needed to be done, one may go from the Life-Pattern of the house to the Life-Pattern of withdrawal into

5 the forest, with his wife or without her. Knowing Law after thoroughly studying the Forest Teachings there, celibate (having already generated children), he comes to have the same self as the Everlasting.

* = *śraddhā*. † Of the sacrificial rite.
‡ = the part of an offering that is accidentally spilled.
§ = the forms and results of sacrifices.
‖ A reference to the initiation rite that makes one a Vedic student.

These marks of the sages who are celibate may be effected by a highly intelligent brahmin from the very outset, king.° O lord of peoples, the entitlement to live by begging is permitted for a brahmin who has completed celibate studentship and seeks Absolute Freedom. That sage shall have no fire and no home; he shall lie down where he is when the sun sets and live upon whatever comes to him; he shall be self-controlled, keep his senses under control, have no desires, regard everything to be the same, not be given to indulgence, and be even-tempered. Having reached the Life-Pattern of tranquility, the seer comes to have the same self as the Everlasting.

10 * Having studied the Veda and finished everything that he had to do; having ensured the continuation of his lineage; having enjoyed pleasures; he may, with full deliberation, perform the very difficult to perform householder Law seen as the Law of an ascetic sage.

That is, one following the Life-Pattern of the house should be satisfied with his own wife and approach her only in her season (though he should also serve for the levirate), and not be false to his wife nor deceitful; he should be moderate in taking food, hold the Gods supreme, be grateful, truthful, gentle, kind, patient, self-controlled, and complaisant; never negligent of the offerings to the Gods and the ancestors; constantly giving food to brahmins, unselfish, and generous to people of all markings;† and he should be constantly engaged in the Vedic sacrifices.

Now in this regard high-minded great seers repeat something that was sung by Nārāyaṇa; it is very significant and involves extraordinary asceticism. Pay attention as I speak it forth.

Truthfulness, rectitude, honoring guests, Law, Profit, delight in one's wife—pleasures are to be pursued in this world and the next, this is my view.

15 Supporting wife and children and reciting the Vedas. The supreme seers say this Life-Pattern is the best for those who are strictly observant.

‡ So that brahmin devoted to the rites of sacrificial worship who dwells in householding in the correct way will completely cleanse the activities of householding and reach a cleansed result in heaven.

* Five proto-upajāti triṣṭubh stanzas.
† = the specific characteristics of particular sects, devotions, vows, ways of life.
‡ One nearly classical upajāti triṣṭubh.

It is thought that after he leaves his body behind, the desires he wished for never decay; their eyes, heads, and faces on every side of him, they wait upon him endlessly.

Eating alone, reciting one's chants alone, moving about unobtrusively alone; smeared with impurity and dirt; and listening obediently to a single teacher, Yudhiṣṭhira, the celibate student is always engaged in performing vows, holds his consecration to be supreme, is always compliant, lives
20 always doing what is his duty, considers nothing that is not the Veda.* He is always obedient to his teacher and should bow down to him. He has not withdrawn from the six works,† but he has undertaken none of them either; he does nothing in his own right. He performs no service for an enemy.‡ This is the Life-Pattern prescribed for the celibate student.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

62.1 Tell me the Lawful, Meritorious Deeds that are soothing, pleasant, bring great results, cause no injury, and are highly esteemed in the world;° which are means to happiness and which bring happiness to those like me.§

Bhīṣma said:

Four Patterns of Life have been prescribed here for the brahmin, lord. The three Orders follow after them, most excellent Bharata.

> ‖ Many deeds that are paramount preoccupations of men of the Kingly Order have been prescribed and lead to heaven. Tradition has not prescribed them merely as examples; they are all duly enjoined upon the *kṣatra*.°
>
> A brahmin who performs the actions of kṣatriyas, vaiśyas, or śūdras is despised as a dimwit in this world, and in the next world he goes down to hell.

5 O Pāṇḍava, label a brahmin who has established himself in the wrong work with the term that is used in ordinary usage for slaves, dogs, wolves, and beasts.

"Undecaying" is the term for the heavenly worlds of a brahmin who performs the six works,# who carries out all the Meritorious Deeds in all four of the religious Patterns of Life,° who has come to be sophisticated, who is cleansed, enthusiastically devoted to asceticism, who has no desires, and who is freely generous.

Whatever sort of work someone performs in relation to whatever

* Text note: See endnote at 61.19.
† Probably reciting the Veda, teaching the Veda, performing sacrifices, officiating at sacrifices, giving, and receiving.
‡ = one inimical to his teacher.
§ = men of the Kingly Order.
‖ Two proto-upajāti triṣṭubh stanzas.
See the footnote at 12.61.20.

things—and however and wherever—in exactly corresponding ways he attains the attributes corresponding to that exact work.

O Indra among kings, you should know that the value that is counted in the recitation of the Vedas is greater than the prosperity that arises through agriculture, commerce, and animal husbandry.

10 Time, which is driven by Time and fixed by the turnings of Time, necessarily does deeds high, low, and middling; some are finite gifts, and formerly some effected the highest good.° It* is a never-decaying, universal realm absorbed in its own work.

Bhīṣma said:

63.1
> † Drawing the bowstring and destroying enemies; tilling the soil, commerce, and watching over beasts; and obedient servitude—never to do these for the sake of gain is a brahmin's supreme obligation.

An intelligent householder should attend to the six kinds of brahmin work. Dwelling in the wilderness is recommended for a brahmin who has finished what he was obliged to do.

He should avoid the menial service of a king, wealth from agriculture, and living by commerce; he should also avoid deviousness, engendering bastards, and usury.

> ‡ The nominal brahmin who acts badly, who has fallen from Law, who keeps a śūdra woman, who is a vicious traitor, or who is an entertainer becomes a śūdra, king. That one fails to do his proper work and ends up taking commissions from one and all.°
>
> 5 Whether he recites the Vedas or does not, king, he is the equal of śūdras and should be used like one of the servants.° All these are equal to śūdras, king, and the king should shun them for the rites worshiping the Gods.
>
> The offerings to the Gods and the ancestors, and whatever other presents are to be given, should not be given to the brahmin who has abandoned the performance of Lawful rites as his proper livelihood, who is the same as a wild Āśana° that lives cruelly doing violence.
>
> So, king, Virtue has been assigned to the brahmin: Self-control, cleanliness, and rectitude. And, too, every one of the religious Patterns of Life was bestowed upon the brahmin by Brahmā in the past.
>
> Whoever is self-controlled, a drinker of Soma, has a noble character, is compassionate, puts up with everything, is

* = Time. † A classical upajāti triṣṭubh.
‡ Seven Vedic-style, irregular triṣṭubhs.

without desires, upright, gentle, kind, and patient is a brahmin,
not the evildoer who is the opposite of these.

All peoples that seek Lawful Merit distinguish śūdras, vaiśyas,
and the Kingly Order,* O king. If he judges that those Orders
are merely attached to the customs of their tribes,† Viṣṇu does
not approve, son of Pāṇḍu.

10 And in that realm there would not be the System of the Four
Orders of all the people, nor any who speak the texts of the
Vedas, nor any of the sacrificial offerings, nor the various rites
of all the people, and at the same time there would be none
living in any of the religious Patterns of Life.

Should someone of the three Orders‡ wish to live according to the religious Patterns of Life,° hear, Pāṇḍava, the Laws that pertain to the Life-Patterns. All the Patterns of Life—excepting the one based on desirelessness—are prescribed for that śūdra who has only a short while,§ or who is in his tenth decade,° if he has fulfilled his duty of obedient service, accomplished the task of extending his lineage, and taken his leave from the king, O lord of the earth. They do not say the life of begging‖ is for that one who follows this Law,# nor, king, is it for the vaiśya, nor for one in the Kingly Order.

15 A vaiśya who has fulfilled his obligations, who has passed the prime of his life, who has labored hard for the king, may enter the cycle of the Life-Patterns° after being given leave by the king.

Having studied the Vedas in a Lawfully Ritual Way and the Learned Teachings for kings, O faultless one; having performed the works of extending his lineage, and so on; having performed the Soma rites; having stood guard over all his subjects in accordance with Law, O best of speakers; having completed the rites of the Royal Consecration, Horse Sacrifice, and others according to the texts, and having given the brahmins presents;** having won victory in battle, whether trifling or great; having installed his son as guardian of the realm's subjects, Pāṇḍava, or someone of another *gotra*, or simply another kṣatriya who is esteemed, O bull of kṣatriyas;
20 having worshiped his ancestors strictly according to the prescriptions with the sacrificial rites for worshiping ancestors, having diligently worshiped the Gods with the sacrificial rites of worship and the seers with the Vedas, a king may, when the time of his end arrives, desire to enter the next Life-

* = kṣatriyas. † = *jātidharmas.*
‡ = the three non-brahmin Orders.
§ = a short while left to live.
‖ = the fourth *āśrama,* "the one based on desirelessness."
\# = the Law of the śūdra.
** These actions could be taken as a specification of the stipulation just above that the king guard his subjects "in accordance with Law."

Pattern—he may obtain perfection by going through the Life-Patterns in order.

Also, one who has left behind the Law of the house* may live as a royal seer, lord of kings, by going the way of begging, even if he still hopes to live.†

They do not call this‡ a terminal action° for the three Orders;§ but, O bull of the Bharatas, it is one for those four different kinds of men dwelling in the four Life-Patterns.‖

\# Much that is excellent in the world has been made available
to people by kṣatriyas faithfully serving the Good Law. All the
Meritorious Lawful Deeds and the secondary Laws of the other
three Orders come from the Law of the king—so I hear from
the Veda.

25 King, just as the footprints of all other creatures are lost in the
elephant's footprint, notice that similarly, in every instance, all
other Laws disappear in the Laws of the king.

The men who know the Laws** declare other Laws†† which
few depend upon and which yield but few benefits. The nobles
say the Law of *kṣatra,* and no other, is the one upon which
many depend, the one which takes the form of great good
fortune.

All Laws follow after the king's Law. All the Laws are protected
by it. Every act of Giving Something Up‡‡ is based on the king's
Laws, and they say the foremost and primordial Law lies in the
act of Giving Something Up.

If the administration of the rod of force were struck down, the
Triple Learning would drown; all the Laws would be opposed,
and they would cease to exist; and all the Laws of the religious
Life-Patterns would be gone, if the ancient, *kṣatra* Law of the
king were given up.

All acts of Giving Something Up are seen to take place on the
basis of the Lawful Deeds of the king; all ritual consecrations

* That is, presumably, someone now in the Life-Pattern of the forest hermit.
† As opposed to being restricted to the deathbed ritual described just above.
‡ = entering a Life-Pattern.
§ = the three non-brahmin Orders of society.
‖ Evidently brahmins who chose an *āśrama* as a permanent way of life; see endnote.
\# Seven proto-śālinī triṣṭubh stanzas.
** = brahmins espousing the ideals of the *āśramadharma.*
†† = other than the Laws of the king.
‡‡ = *tyāga,* which is at the heart of sacrifices *(yajña),* gifts *(dāna),* and renunciation *(tyāga, saṃnyāsa).*

are spoken upon the basis of the Lawful Deeds of the king; all
disciplines of yoga meditation are declared on the basis of the
Lawful Deeds of the king; and all people have entered under
the Lawful Deeds of the king.

30 The constant taking of life in the state of nature troubles those
who are devoted to Law;° so too when Laws are cut off from the
Lawful Deeds of a king—people then neglect their proper Law
in every instance.

Bhīṣma said:

64.1 The Laws of the system of four Life-Patterns, the customary Laws of tribes, and those that are particular to kings—all these are based on the Law of *kṣatra*. All these Laws, O most excellent of the Bharatas, are based on the *kṣatra* Law. Even those who have no desires for anything found in the world of living beings* are also based on the Law of *kṣatra*. On the basis of scriptures alone they† explain the Law of those who dwell in the Life-Patterns—which is not obvious and which has many different points of entry—to have its existence from that‡ and to be everlasting.

Others use fine statements to say Law is merely what people determine it to be. (Others, who do not believe there is any determination of it, delight
5 in counterexamples of Laws.) They say the Law that is established among kṣatriyas consists for the most part of what is manifestly comfortable, is experienced directly by oneself, is not transitory, and is beneficial to all people.

This famous report without compare regarding brahmins committed to the Lawfully Meritorious Life-Patterns has been spelled out here in the Laws for Kings by virtuous men, Yudhiṣṭhira, as was done previously regarding the other three Orders of society.

King, you once were told that a great many heroic kings went to the mighty Viṣṇu, the sovereign God Nārāyaṇa, lord of all beings, to learn the policy for administering the rod of force. Each one having formerly judged his own work to be equivalent to the Life-Patterns, those kings then stood in attendance upon the God and have since adhered to the standard that was pronounced:

§ The Sādhyas, Gods, Vasus, Aśvins, Rudras, and all the squads
of Maruts—all were created as Gods long ago by the first God,
and they have succeeded by conducting themselves within the
Law of *kṣatra*.

* = renouncers.
† = the brahmin expounders of Law noted above.
‡ That is, it too derives from the Law of the *kṣatra*.
§ One metrically mixed triṣṭubh.

10 Here I will give you a statement of the rule,* and this is the settled determination of the matter.†

Once, O lord of kings, when lawlessness prevailed—the Dānavas had reduced everything to a single way of life‡—there was a heroic king named Māndhātar. That king performed a rite of sacrificial worship with a desire to see the God Nārāyaṇa, who is without beginning, middle, and end. In the course of the rite, O tiger among kings, that king Māndhātar took upon his head the two feet of the exalted Viṣṇu, the supreme being. Viṣṇu had taken on Indra's form and showed that form to Māndhātar. Surrounded by kings who were pious, Māndhātar was worshiping that lord. O illustrious one, this great discussion about Viṣṇu then took place between that group of kings and that exalted one.§

Indra said:

15 ‖ What is it you want, most excellent of the supporters of Law,
that you wish to see the immeasurable Nārāyaṇa, whose
substance and power stretch far, who is unending, who is,
indeed, the first God, the primordial one?

That God takes all forms, but not even I can see him in person.
Not even Brahmā can. King, I will grant you the other desires
that remain in your heart, for among mortals you are the king.

You are devoted to what is truly Real and dedicated to Law;
you keep your senses under control, and you are certainly a
hero. Beyond that you are a pleasure to the Gods with your
intelligence, your devotion, and the intensity of your Trusting
Surrender. So I will give the wish you desire.

Māndhātar said:

Blessed one, undoubtedly I will not see the first God. Having
propitiated you with my head,# and having abandoned
everything at my disposal, desiring Merit, I wish to go into the
wilderness, the path to the Real so often used in this world.

Heavenly worlds are reached from the vast, immeasurable Law
of *kṣatra*, and one's glory is firmly established through it. But I

* = *dharma;* compare with *dharma* at *MBh* 12.310.6.
† The matter at issue is whether the violent Law of the *kṣatra* stands over and comprehends all other Lawful, Meritorious behavior, including that of renouncers and brahmins engaged in their ideal Life-Patterns *(āśramas)*.
‡ = the condition of *saṃkara*, the mixture, blending together of people.
§ = Indra, that is, Viṣṇu disguised as Indra.
‖ Seven mixed triṣṭubh stanzas.
That is, by having placed the God's feet upon his head.

do not know how to do this Law, the oldest in the world, which started out from the first God.

Indra said:

20 You would not be behaving with devotion to Meritorious Law were you to have no army. But if you are diligently observant,* you will gain the course that goes the farthest. Indeed the Law of *kṣatra* did start out from the first God; the other Laws are secondary and came later.

The subordinate ones were sent forth with limits. But free of limit are those with the wonderful starting point, those that are distinguished as the Law of *kṣatra.*° All the Laws are contained in this Law, so they say it is the most excellent Law.

(The infinitely powerful Gods and the seers were all protected once in the past by the action of Viṣṇu, who sent their enemies reeling with the Law of *kṣatra.*)

† If that immeasurable, treasure-laden blessed one had not slain all those enemies, no brahmins would have come to be, nor would the original maker of the world, nor the Laws of the strictly observant, nor the original Laws.

Had that most excellent, immeasurable God not boldly conquered this broad earth in the past, there would be no society of four Orders, nor any of the Laws of the four Patterns of Life, because the *brahman* would have been destroyed.

25 Laws by the hundreds have been observed that were set going again by the everlasting Law of *kṣatra.* The original Laws get going in Age after Age. They say the Law of *kṣatra* is the oldest in the world.

Abandoning oneself in battle, compassion for all beings, knowledge of the world, rescuing and protecting the downcast, and rescuing the oppressed—these are found in the *kṣatra* Law of kings.

Wild men moved by desire and anger refrain from doing evil because they fear the king; and likewise, other men schooled in

* That is, diligently observant of the Law.

† Five triṣṭubh stanzas; the first three are mixed vātormī and śālinī pādas, and the last two are almost perfectly classical śālinīs.

tradition and devoted to all the Laws behave virtuously and observe Law strictly.

All creatures, as they move about in the world, are to be protected like children by kings and by the Law appropriate to the standing they manifest. The eternal Law of *kṣatra*, oldest in the world, higher than all other Laws, reaches all the way up to the everlasting and undecaying reality, and facing in every direction, it itself never decays.

Indra said:

65.1 * Powerful in these ways, comprising all the other Laws, the Law of *kṣatra* is the most excellent of all the Laws. It must be guarded by you noble lions of the world; otherwise, creatures will perish.

The king should recognize his principal Duties of Law to be the improvement of the earth (which is a means to the improvement of the king himself), not taking handouts, the protection of his subjects, compassion for all beings, and Giving Up his body in war.

Sages say Giving Something Up is the best thing one can do, and he who gives up his body is the best of all. Within the Lawful Duties of kings, everything is always being given up; that is always plainly evident to you, O you guardians of the earth.

Through much learning, or through obedience to one's teacher, or through slaughtering enemies, they say, the kṣatriya celibate student is always doing Lawful Deeds. Only he who desires the Merit of doing a Lawful Deed lives the Life-Pattern.°

5 When a judicial proceeding is underway, which is a matter affecting all,° he must proceed carefully, eschewing his own likes and dislikes.

They say that the Law of *kṣatra*, with all its exertions, is a religious Life-Pattern°—because it fixes the system of the four Orders of society and because it protects creatures with these and those robust measures and restraints.° They say it is the eldest Law and comprises all the other Laws.

When people in the Orders of society do not perform each his own proper Law, then it is wrong that they speak of these and those "Laws."°

* Eight triṣṭubh stanzas; the first seven are proto-śālinī, and the first two of these seven, quite remarkably, contain three hypermetric verses.

Of humans who regularly perish in wild, completely lawless enterprises,° they say they have become beasts.

The *kṣatra* Law is an excellent religious Life-Pattern, because it causes one to go from the lust for riches to policy.

* The way of brahmins with the Triple Learning° and anything that has been declared to be a religious Life-Pattern for brahmins—such, they say, is the best work for brahmins, and any brahmin doing anything else should be killed with a sword like a śūdra.

King, one should know that a brahmin must follow the Laws of the four religious Patterns of Life and the Laws of the Vedas, and nothing else
10 whatsoever. If one conducts himself otherwise, then that behavior is not proper for him. As with dogs, so with brahmins: one's basic character° is manifested through one's actions. A brahmin engaged in improper work is not worthy of respect. They say one who refuses to devote himself to his proper work is not to be trusted.

† The Laws for all four of the Orders of society are to be raised on high by vigorous, manly kṣatriyas—this is their Law. Therefore, the Laws of the king, and none of the others, are the eldest. I regard the Laws of vigorous men to be the ones preeminent in power.

Māndhātar said:

Greeks, mountain folk, Gāndhārans, Chinese, savages, barbarians, Śakas, Tuṣāras, Kahvas, Persians, Andhras, Madrakas, Oḍras, Pulindas, Ramaṭhas, Kācas, and Mlecchas all, and men who are sons of brahmins
15 and kṣatriyas, and also vaiśyas and śūdras: How can all of these who live within a kingdom do Meritorious Lawful Deeds? How can all those who live as barbarians be kept within Law by men like me? This is what I want to hear. Tell me this, blessed one. For you have become a friend of us kṣatriyas, O lord of the Gods.

Indra said:

All the barbarians must obey their mother and father, the way those who live religious Patterns of Life obey their teachers and guides. And all the barbarians must obey kings. The Meritorious rites prescribed in the Vedas are Lawful Deeds prescribed for them. And likewise the rites of worship for the ancestors. And they should make gifts to the brahmins at
20 appropriate times—wells, cisterns, and shelters for sleeping. Non-injury,

* The final stanza in this set of triṣṭubhs is a perfectly formed, classical śālinī triṣṭubh.
† Another perfectly formed, classical śālinī triṣṭubh, like the eighth one noted just above.

truthfulness, not being quick to anger, the preservation of what has been gained through inheritance and work, supporting wives and children, cleanliness, and benevolence are also prescribed for them. He who desires riches must give presents to the priests for all sacrificial rites. All barbarians must perform the cooked offerings. Such rites as these were enjoined in the past, and they are to be performed now by all peoples, O blameless king.

Māndhātar said:

Barbarian people are observed living in the world in all the four Orders of society, even following the four Life-Patterns, though under different outer manifestations.°

Indra said:

When the administration of the rod of force has disappeared, when the Law of the king has been repudiated, creatures go thoroughly awry
25 because of the corruption of the king, king. The number of mendicant holy men and ascetics will be innumerable. After the Kṛta Age has passed, there will be free choices of the different religious Patterns of Life. Heedless of the excellent ways of the ancient Laws, moved by desire and anger, people will arrive at evil. When exalted kings avert evil through the administration of the rod of force, then Law does not waver, is valid, everlasting, supreme. Whoever despises the king, the supreme teacher of the world, that person's gifts, his sacrificial offerings, and the memorial rites for his ancestors never bear fruit. The Gods greatly esteem that abiding overlord of men who is
30 a God, that lord of men who desires Merit. The blessed Progenitor, who sent forth this entire world, favors the *kṣatra* for purposes of initiating and restricting the doing of Lawful Deeds. I admire and venerate him who, with thoughtful insight, stays mindful of the progress of Lawful Deeds that have been initiated; in him the *kṣatra* is firmly established.

Bhīṣma said:

After he had said this, that blessed one, lord Viṣṇu, surrounded by the squads of Maruts, went to his palace, his supreme, undecaying abode. With Lawful Deeds set moving in this way and well performed, O blameless one, what intelligent person of great learning would despise the *kṣatra?*

Some creatures are active, but wrongly, and others have wrongly withdrawn from action, and in the meantime they go to their destruction
35 like blind men on a road. Make them turn° upon that wheel that was set turning in the beginning and which, even in the beginning, was the highest recourse people had, O tiger among men. So do I advise you, blameless one.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

66.1 I have heard the four religious Patterns of Life for human beings discussed by earlier teachers. But now, grandfather, I ask you to give me a fuller explanation of them.

Bhīṣma said:

Yudhiṣṭhira, all the Laws on this that are highly regarded by virtuous men are known to you as they are known to me, O strong-armed prince. But, Yudhiṣṭhira, as you ask me about Law that is subject to different appearances,° pay attention to this, O most excellent of the supporters of Law.

All these activities are found among the works performed by people of strictly virtuous behavior who live according to the four religious Life-Patterns, O son of Kuntī, bull among men.

5 When a king is detached from love and aversion as he watches over beings, equitably administering the rod of punishment, he would be in the Life-Pattern of mendicancy.*

When the king knows both the acquisition and discharge of riches, and the restraint and encouragement of his subjects, then that vigorous one living according to prescriptions would be in the Life-Pattern of tranquility.†

When the king's kinsmen, affines, and friends have been ruined and he rescues them, he would be in the Life-Pattern of consecration.

He who performs the daily observances and the sacrificial rites for creatures,° for the ancestors, and those for people, would be in the Life-Pattern of the forest, son of Pṛthā.

The king has a many-sided consecration because he protects all creatures and guards his own kingdom, and he would be in the Life-Pattern of the forest.

10 Regular study of the Vedas, patience, honoring one's teacher, and obedience to one's teacher would constitute the Life-Pattern of the *brahman.*‡

When he follows the path that is never crooked and is never deceitful toward any creatures, he would be in the Life-Pattern of the *brahman.*

When he presents great amounts of wealth to seers of the Triple Learning who are forest hermits, he would be in the Life-Pattern of the forest.

When he has sympathy for all beings and practices kindness toward them, he would be in the Life-Pattern that contains all the other Life-Patterns.

* = the *āśrama* of renunciation.
† = the *āśrama* of renunciation.
‡ = the Veda.

When he observes sympathy in all situations for the young and the old, Yudhiṣṭhira, Kauravya, he would be in the Life-Pattern that contains all the other Life-Patterns.

15 When, O scion of the Kurus, he rescues beings who have been violently injured and have taken refuge with him, he would be dwelling in the Life-Pattern of householding.

When he protects moving and nonmoving beings in every way, always paying them the honor they deserve, he would be dwelling in the Life-Pattern of householding.

O Son of Pṛthā, when he restrains and encourages the senior and junior wives, his brothers, and the children and grandchildren, then his asceticism is that of the householding Life-Pattern.

O tiger among men, protecting those virtuous men worthy of worship who see their own selves in other creatures would be the Life-Pattern of householding.

When, Bhārata, he receives all beings who dwell in any of the Life-Patterns in his house with food, that is the householding Life-Pattern.

20 He who abides appropriately in the Laws created by the Creator, gets the unsurpassed fruit of all the Life-Patterns.

O Yudhiṣṭhira, son of Kuntī, they say the man whose virtuous qualities never fade away is the most excellent of men living in any of the Life-Patterns.

He who pays honor to rank, to age, and to clan lives in all the Life-Patterns, Yudhiṣṭhira.

O son of Kuntī, tiger among men, the king who preserves the Laws of the different countries and the Laws of different clans would be dwelling in all the Life-Patterns.

He who makes copious offerings to beings at the right times and pays them honor would dwell in the Life-Pattern of the strictly virtuous.

25 Even if he is in his tenth decade, the king who looks after the Lawful Deeds of all his people is a man living in a religious Life-Pattern.

Where the strictly virtuous men of society are protected—those men who are conversant with Law and do their Lawful Deeds—the king in that kingdom receives a quarter portion.* And, O tiger among men, when kings do not protect people who delight in Law, who are devoted to Law, they get

* Of the Merit *(dharma).*

the evil of their people. And, blameless Yudhiṣṭhira, all those who are supposed to assist kings in protecting their subjects get a share in the Merit done by those others.*

They say householding removes what is inauspicious° in all the religious Patterns of Life. We esteem it as a purifier, O tiger among men.

30 The man who sees the likeness of himself in other beings, who drops his club, who conquers his anger, gains happiness after he dies.

That swift ship which is buoyed up by the Good Law,° which draws its energy from Lightness† which has for its lines the tethers of the Good Law, which goes on its course blown by the wind of Giving Things Up‡—that ship will save you.

When the desire in his heart has withdrawn from every object, then he abides in Universal Existence,° and from that he reaches *brahman.*

Having become completely placid by means of your thoughts and through the discipline of yoga meditation, O tiger, lord of men, you will gain merit while devoted to watching over your subjects.

O blameless one, take care in watching over the brahmins who are habitually devoted to the study of the Vedas and doing holy rites, and take care in watching over all the people.

35 A king gains a hundred times more Lawful Merit by affording protection to his subjects, Bhārata, than he who does Lawful, Meritorious Deeds in the forest and in the Life-Patterns.

So, most excellent of the Pāṇḍavas, this multifaceted Law has been recounted to you. You must carry out this everlasting Law which was seen by the ancients. Your mind focused, devoted to watchfully guarding your subjects, you will gain the Merit of the four Life-Patterns and the four social Orders.

(84g) The Nature and Character of Kingship

12.67–71 (B. 67–70; C. 2495–2714)
67 (67; 2495). Yudhiṣṭhira asks what is a country's most pressing duty and Bhīṣma answers, "Consecrating a king." Lands without kings are miserable (1–5). A land without a

* Usually a person acquires karma only through his or her own deeds.
† = *sattva,* one of the three fundamental material Attributes of the world; here the word also alludes to the "courage or bravery" of warriors, which is relevant to the idea of sacrifice coming up; it can also signify here "universal being."
‡ = *tyāga,* "sacrifice," in the generalized use of that word in English.

king should welcome a conqueror as if he were Indra (5–10). More on the necessity for kingship to prevent the strong from devouring the weak (10–15). Bhīṣma relates a critical episode from ancient history: People sought a king from Brahmā, and he appointed Manu, but Manu shrank from doing the necessary violence. The people then made a pact with him to pay him, assist him militarily, and to give him a quarter of the Merit of their Lawful Deeds. With their help, he then subdued the wicked and enforced Law (15–30). So people who desire prosperity should get a king and be devoted to him (30–35). The king should watch out for his security, speak sweetly, use his wits, be loyal, generous, self-controlled, gentle, and handsome (35).
68 (68; 2535). Yudhiṣṭhira asks why the seers call kings Gods. Bhīṣma recites Bṛhaspati's instruction of Vasumanas, the wise king of Kosala. Vasumanas asked the sage Bṛhaspati what the happiness of people is based on (1–5). Bṛhaspati replied that it is the king. He argued that people would slay each other without the king's influence and protection (5–20). Agriculture would not succeed, the Vedas would not exist, the sacrifices would not be done, and there would be no marriages, and so on, were there no kings (20–25). People feel secure when guarded by kings, and things work as they should (30–35). Bhīṣma praises the king's heroic labor (35) and then his divinity: "The king is a great divinity in the form of a man," taking on the forms of purifying, chastising Fire, the all-seeing Sun, Death, Kubera (lord of wealth), and the punishing Yama as appropriate (40–45). People should be respectful of the king and agreeable to him; he is ferocious and dangerous (45–50). Kings are worthy of worship. Industrious and virtuous people should attach themselves to a king, and kings should choose such men as their advisors (50–55). A king makes men brave and happy; he benefits those who rely upon him in this life and the next; and he himself goes to a fine place in heaven (55–60).
69 (69; 2596). Yudhiṣṭhira asks for details about how the king guards his people. Bhīṣma emphasizes that the king's work begins by his having fully conquered his own self (1–5). He then describes how kings should use spies and thwart the spies of their enemies (5–10). Generalities on the king's making peace and war with his enemies follow (10–20). He speaks of taxation, appointments, punishment, Vedic knowledge and rituals, and yogic virtues (20–30). He

describes numerous emergency defensive procedures when the kingdom is attacked by a more powerful king (30–45) and gives numerous general directions on the management of the kingdom in light of possible attack (50–60). Bhīṣma then presents several catechetical lists: the seven elements of the kingdom that must be protected, the six virtues, the two groups of three, followed by some general verses on the duties of kingship (60–70).

70 (69; 2669). Yudhiṣṭhira asks about the benefits of the king's administering punishment, and Bhīṣma emphasizes its value. The happiness of people and the Gods depends upon the king's use of the rod of punishment (1–5). The king creates the Age, and a good king makes a Kṛta Age when Lawless Deeds are unknown. The Tretā Age occurs when the king abandons one quarter of the policy of using the royal rod of punishment, and the Dvāpara Age when he drops half of that policy. The Kali Age, characterized mostly by Lawless Deeds and a reversal of most values, occurs when the king completely abandons the policy of punishment. The king's rewards for these levels of policy are set forth (5–25). Administering punishment is the highest Lawful Duty of the king (25–30).

71 (70; 2701). Yudhiṣṭhira asks how a king should behave, and Bhīṣma offers a list of thirty-six attributes joined with thirty-six other attributes a king should have. It begins with the king's ungrudging performance of his Lawful Duties. Yudhiṣṭhira then praises Bhīṣma and acts accordingly (1–10).

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

67.1 You have now declared the system of the four religious Patterns of Life and the system of the four Orders of society. Tell me now, grandfather, what is the most pressing duty a country has?

Bhīṣma said:

The consecration of a king is a country's most pressing duty. A country without an Indra is weak, and barbarians overwhelm it. The Good Law is not firmly fixed in countries that have no king, and their inhabitants feed upon each other every which way. Woe betide the kingless country!

> Holy Learning says, "When they choose a king, they are choosing Indra." Anyone who wants prosperity should worship the king like Indra.

5

> A Vedic text says, "One should not live in countries without kings." In countries without kings fire does not transmit the offerings.

And if a powerful prince seeking a kingdom attacks lands that have no king, or lands where the king has been slain, those people should go out to meet him and receive him with honor: This is sound counsel in this matter, for nothing is more evil than the evil of a land without a king. Everything ought to be agreeable, should he look it all over; for when a mighty man is enraged, he can wreak complete destruction. The cow that is hard to milk comes to much distress, but they do not torment her when she is easy to milk. They do not inflict suffering on the country that bows without suffering affliction; they do not force a piece of wood to bend when it bends on its own. With these analogies in mind, a wise man will bow to a stronger man; he who bows to a stronger man is bowing to Indra. (10)

So a country that wants prosperity should always get itself a king. It is no use to have wealth, no use to have a wife, when a country has no king. For the evil man who steals the property of others is very pleased in a land that has no king. But when others steal what is his, he wants a king! Even the wicked are never safe then, as two take what is one's, and many take what belongs to two. He who is not a slave is made a slave, and women are seized by force. It is because of this that the Gods developed protectors for people. Should there be no king in the world, no one to wield the royal rod of force upon the earth, then the stronger would roast the weaker upon spits, like fish. We have learned that peoples without kings have vanished in the past, devouring each other, the way fishes in the water eat the smaller ones. (15)

We've been taught that people got together and made agreements: "We must get rid of the men who talk tough, the men who carry clubs, the men who ravish other men's wives, take what is not theirs, and the like." But after they had made this agreement for the purpose of inspiring confidence in all the Orders of society without distinction, they did not abide by it. Miserably tormented, they went all together to the Grandfather,* and said, "We are being destroyed, blessed one, we have no lord. Appoint for us a lord whom we might honor all together, a lord who shall protect us." He appointed Manu for them, but Manu did not make them happy. (20)

Manu said:

I am afraid of the cruel deeds. Kingship is extremely difficult to do, especially among humans who constantly behave wrongly.

Bhīṣma said:

The people said to him: "Do not be afraid. The sin of these deeds will go away.° And we will enlarge your treasury by giving you one fiftieth of

* = Brahmā, the Creator.

our cattle and gold, and a tenth portion of our grain. The men who stand first with the foremost weaponry,° will follow after you sir, as the Gods 25 follow Great Indra. When you have grown mighty, king, and are majestic and unassailable, you will set all of us up in comfort, as Kubera did the Rākṣasas. And whatever Meritorious Deeds people perform while protected by you, the king, a quarter part of that Merit will belong to you. That will be our pledge to you. Suffused with all this Merit so easily obtained, protect us in every way, as Śatakratu* does the Gods. March right out for conquest, burning like the sun! Blow away the pride of our enemies! Our Lawful, Meritorious Deeds will always win!"

Surrounded by a great army, that tremendously brilliant man went out on an expedition. Complemented by the men of the great noble families, he 30 seemed to blaze with fiery energy. Upon seeing his magnificence—the way the Gods see Great Indra's—all fled in terror and dedicated themselves to their particular Lawful Work. He then went all around the earth, the way rain-filled Parjanya does,† suppressing the wicked and joining them to their proper work.

Any men, anywhere upon the earth, who want prosperity should put a king at their head this way, because it will further the welfare of the populace. And the populace should always bow down to the king with devotion when he is present, just as pupils bow to their teacher, just as the Gods bow to the thousand-eyed one.‡ Even his enemies are highly respectful of a man whose own people honor him well, but his enemies 35 overrun the king despised by his own people. When a king is overrun by his enemies, it brings misery to everyone; so people give their king royal parasols and conveyances, clothing and jewelry, foods and drinks, houses, thrones, couches, and all kinds of paraphernalia.

He should keep his person under guard and be difficult to attack. He should smile as he speaks, and he should reply to men sweetly when addressed. He should be sophisticated, his devotion should be firm, he should be disposed to share things, and his senses should be under control. When looked at he should return the look gently, directly, and beautifully.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

68.1 Why do the seers say that the king, the overlord of human beings, is a divinity, O bull of the Bharatas? Tell me this, grandfather.

Bhīṣma said:

On this they recite this ancient account of how Vasumanas§ questioned Bṛhaspati, O Bhārata.

The king of Kosala, Vasumanas by name, was the best of wise men.

* = Indra.

† A reference to the perceptible travel of the monsoon fronts.

‡ = Indra.

§ = a king of Ayodhyā; a maternal grandson of Yayāti and stepbrother of Pratardana (king of Kāśi).

A man of sophisticated insight, he questioned the great seer Bṛhaspati. Familiar with polite comportment, he did everything prescribed by proper humility toward Bṛhaspati, keeping the seer on his immediate right and 5 bowing before him in the prescribed way. Devoted to the welfare of all beings, seeking welfare for his subjects that was based upon the Good Law, he asked about the method for governing, O lord of peoples.

"Who makes beings prosper, and who makes them waste away? Whom should they worship to gain boundless comfort, O man of great insight?"

After the immeasurably powerful great king of Kosala had questioned him, Bṛhaspati, speaking with great intensity, commended to him the respectful treatment of kings.

"Great king, a people's doing Meritorious, Lawful Deeds is plainly seen to be grounded in their king. People do not devour each other only because they are afraid of their king. The king calms the whole restless, anxious world by doing his Lawful Duty, and, having calmed it, he rules over it. 10 As creatures would be immersed in blind darkness and not even see each other should the sun or moon not rise, king—as fish would be were there no water, or birds were there no place safe to perch—so creatures would amuse themselves just as they pleased, attacking each other over and over. They would go awry, pummeling and thrashing each other, and before long they would become extinct, no doubt of it. People here would disappear in exactly this way without a king; they would be immersed in blind darkness and be like cattle without a herdsman.

"Were a king not standing guard, the stronger would seize the holdings of the weaker and kill those people as they struggled.

15 "Were a king not standing guard, the wicked would immediately seize vehicles, clothing, ornaments, and all sorts of precious stones.

"Were a king not standing guard, there would be no property, no saying, 'This is mine,' in this world; universal plunder would go on.

"Were a king not standing guard, evil ones would torment and even kill mothers and fathers, the aged, teachers, guests, and preceptors.

"Were a king not standing guard, many different sharp-bladed weapons would fall often upon those who do Lawful Deeds, while Unlawful Deeds would be exempt.

"Were a king not standing guard, the wealthy would regularly be slain, held captive, and harassed; people would never come to the idea of possession.

20 "Were a king not standing guard, the sky would be the limit; the world would belong to the barbarians and would fall into the horrible hell Naraka.

"Were a king not standing guard, none would grow crops from seeds, none would plow, none engage in commerce; the Good Law would be submerged, and there would be no Triple Learning.

"Were a king not standing guard, there would be no sacrificial rites of worship affording opulent presents to the priests and done according to Vedic prescriptions; there would be no marriages, nor any associations of people.

"Were a king not standing guard, bulls would not rise up, butter churns would not churn, the hamlets of the cattle-herdsmen would disappear.

"Were a king not standing guard, all would perish in an instant,° frightened, hearts trembling, stupefied, screaming, 'Ayiii! Ayiii!'

25 "Were a king not standing guard, they would not feel completely secure and engage in year-long Soma-pressing rites that bring nice presents for the priests according to the prescriptions.

"Were a king not standing guard, no brahmins full of ascetic heat would study the four Vedas; none would take the baths after study or asceticism.

"Were a king not standing guard, one hand would rob the other hand; all barriers would be smashed, and all would panic and run every which way.°

"Were a king not standing guard, people would be assaulted by others who were themselves previously assaulted, and such people would never enter the embrace of Law; those who act would proceed with their senses and bodily faculties doing whatever they wanted.°

"Were a king not standing guard, wrong policies would go forward, there would be intermixing of the Orders of society, and famine would spread throughout the country.

30 "Protected by a king, people feel completely secure; they throw open the doors of their homes and lay down to sleep as they like. No one suffers verbal abuse from anyone, nor the insults of hand gestures, if people have as their protector a king devoted to Law.

"When a king is on guard, women, wearing all their ornaments, can go into the street, unaccompanied by men, without any danger.

"When a king is on guard, people give themselves over to the Good Law. They do not harm each other; rather, they do each other kindnesses.

"When a king is on guard, the three Orders of society worship the Gods with the different Great Sacrifices,° and they intently study Learned Teachings.

35 "When a king is on guard, the world has productive work as its base and is ever supported by the Triple Learning, and everything runs very well.

"When a king takes up that excellent tongue of the wagon and pulls his subjects in it with a tremendous expenditure of energy, then the world is happy.

"Who would not reverence that man who, did he not exist, there would be no beings at all? Who, when he exists, they always exist?

"Anyone who pulls the load that brings pleasure for all people would be engaged in the salutary, favoring work that a king does, a king who would conquer both worlds.

"For merely thinking evil of him silently, a man would certainly be 40 tormented in this life and fall into the hell of Naraka after death. No one can ever scoff at a king, saying, 'He's just a man.' He is a great divinity in the form of a man. He always shows one or another of five forms that is appropriate to the Time: He is Fire, or the Sun, or Death, or Vaiśravaṇa,* or Yama, Lord of the Dead.

"For when the king has been deceived and burns the wicked ones near him with his horrific fiery brilliance, then is he Fire.

"When the king looks upon all beings with his spies, and travels on after he has made them safe, then is he the Sun.

"When, enraged, he destroys unclean men by the hundreds with their sons, grandsons, and all the members of their household, then is he Death.

45 "But when he suppresses all the unrighteous with harsh punishments, and does kindnesses for the righteous, then is he Yama.

"When he refreshes those who are cooperative with streams of wealth, and takes their various gems away from the fractious; when he gives splendid richness to someone or takes it away from someone, then, king, is this king in the world Vaiśravaṇa.

"An industrious person who works tirelessly, who longs for Lawfulness and is not envious of what the king gets, should never speak ill of the king. But one who is always crossing the king will never know happiness, not even if he is a son, a brother, or a friend whom the king holds equal to 50 himself. Blazing fire with the wind as its driver may leave a residue, but no residue is anywhere found of him whom the king seizes. One should stay far away from everything the king guards. As if it were death itself, a man should avoid taking anything that belongs to the king. One can perish

* = Kubera.

whenever one comes into contact with him, as might the deer that brushes against a trap. The intelligent man takes great care of what belongs to the king, as if it were his very own. Stupid men who take the king's property fall for a long time into the horrible, vast, bottomless° hell of Naraka.

"Who would not want to worship the man who is praised with the words 'Rāja, Bhoja, Virāj, Samrāj, Kṣatriya, Bhūpati, and Nṛpa?'

55 "Therefore, the man who wants to prosper and who is self-restrained, who has conquered himself, has his senses under control, is intelligent, has a good memory, and is industrious should attach himself to a king. And a king should honor as an advisor a man who is appreciative, wise, and not petty; whose loyalty is firm, who has control of his senses, who is ever mindful of Law, and who keeps to his place. As to a man whom he has previously kept at a distance, he may rely upon him if that one's devotion is firm, and if he is sophisticated and knows Law, has his senses under control, and is a heroic man who does nothing petty.

> * "A king makes a man brave; a king makes a weak man strong. How can the man the king has seized know any comfort? The king makes anyone who approaches him a happy man.
>
> "The king is the precious heart of his subjects; he is their movement, the base they stand on, their highest happiness. When they rely upon this lord of men, people conquer completely this world and the next.
>
> 60 "The king who has ruled the earth with self-control, truthfulness, and affection, who has offered worship with the great rites of sacrifice—glorious, he approaches a well-prepared place in Triviṣṭapa, Indra's heaven."

After the most excellent king of Kosala was addressed in this way by this teacher, that vigorous man stood guard over his subjects with care.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

69.1 What duty remains to be done specifically by the king? How are people of the country to be protected? How does one guard against his enemies? How does the king use spies? How, Bhārata, does he inspire the trust of the Orders or society? How that of servants, wives, children?

Bhīṣma said:

Listen attentively, great king, to everything a king does, and to what the king, or the king's deputy, must do first.

The king must always conquer himself, and then his enemies. How

* Three classical upajāti triṣṭubh stanzas; the final stanza alternates upendravajra and vaṃśastha lines in a closing flourish.

5 could a king who has not conquered himself conquer his enemies? This is the victory over one's self: Controlling the set of the five senses. Having conquered his senses, a king should be able to stop his enemies.

He should install squads of soldiers in his fortified cities, on boundaries, in the groves of cities, and in the parks of towns; in all the public places in towns, in the middle of the city, and in the royal palace.

He should send out as spies men who have been carefully tested; men who are clever, but who appear to be dumb, blind, or deaf; men who can tolerate hunger and thirst and pain. With full deliberation he should set spies upon all his ministers, upon his allies in their three varieties,* and, 10 great king, upon his sons; also upon the towns, the countryside, and neighboring kings. And they should be commissioned in such a way that they do not know each other. O bull of the Bharatas, he should know the spies his enemy has placed in shops, recreation areas, and crowds; among beggars, in gardens, parks, and gatherings of learned men; in brothels, at crossroads, in assembly halls, and in hostels. The savvy king should disrupt his enemy's spies this way with his own spies; everything he disrupts through his spies is finished off, Pāṇḍava.

When the king himself realizes that he is weak, he should take counsel 15 with his ministers and conclude a treaty with a stronger opponent. When he is weak, but is not known to be so—or when he wants to gain some particular end—the savvy king should hurry and conclude a treaty with his enemy.

As a king protects his kingdom in accordance with Law, the king should appoint men of good qualities and great energy, men who know Law and are strictly virtuous. When a king of great judgment realizes that he is being checked, he should strike in every way at those who have injured him in the past, and at those who are inimical to his people.

Such kings as these should be ignored: One who cannot assist him, he who cannot hurt him, and he who seems incapable of ever saving him. The discerning king should march out against a king not known to him, one who has no protector behind him, one who has no allies,° one who is 20 preoccupied, one who is negligent, and one who is weak. As a vigorous man in good spirits with a healthy and well-nourished army, he should direct the expedition himself, having given the orders for both the expedition and the city ahead of time.

Let a king never subject himself to another, even if the other is stronger; though deficient in troops and strength, he might besiege the other and wear him down. He should put pressure on the other's country with overwhelming operations with weapons, fire, and poisons. He might cause his enemy's advisors and his favorites to get into arguments. The wise king who loves his kingdom should always avoid war.

* = his natural friends, his friends' allies, and his enemies' enemies (Belvalkar).

Bṛhaspati declares that there are three methods for acquiring wealth: conciliation, donation, and division.

The wise king will content himself with what wealth he is able to acquire. He should take taxes from his subjects, O joy of the Kurus, for their
25 protection; the king of unlimited wisdom takes only a sixth portion. What wealth great or small those in their tenth decade may have, he ought not forcibly take for the protection of the townsfolk.

Without a doubt the citizens should be seen as his children. But his partialities toward them must be disclosed when a judicial proceeding has been announced. For supervising judicial proceedings, the king should always appoint a son who is wise, who can make all the different interests of a case clear; for the character of the kingdom is determined by these.° The king should appoint members of his household, or reliable and competent men, to oversee mines, salt-works, tax revenues, crossings, and the elephant forests.

The king who always wields the rod of force correctly will obtain the Merit of Lawful Deeds. The rod of force is always strongly endorsed in the Law of the king.

30 Bhārata, the king should know the Vedas and their auxiliary texts, and he should be wise, very ascetic, habitually generous, and ever a habitual performer of the sacrificial rites of worship. The king should have all these virtues together, and they should always be enduring.

But should the king fail to perform a required action, how could he have heaven? how glory?

But should a king be pressed by a stronger king, after calling to his allies triply,* he should fashion an order of defense. He should send reports onto the roads, rouse up the villages, and make them all enter into the suburbs of the city. He should make the wealthy citizens and the leaders of the army
35 go into forts or protected areas, reassuring them over and over. The king himself should have the grain brought in, and if it is impossible to get it in, then he should have it burned thoroughly with fire. When there is grain standing in fields, he may coax the enemy's men to switch sides; or he should destroy the whole of it, and with his own troops. He should ruin the passages down to rivers and roads. He should drain all the water from reservoirs, and what cannot be drained he should befoul.

"Disputing with his immediate neighbor° over present needs and future benefits, let him oppose that enemy in battle, even if a time of friendly relations is at hand."

The king should have all the small trees near forts cut down at the
40 root, though he should exclude the trees that are holy shrines. Likewise,

* Probably an allusion to the three kinds of his friends; see the footnote above at 69.9.

he should have the branches pruned from old trees, but by all means he should avoid making the leaves fall from trees that are holy shrines. He should have shoulder-high walls built all round, and higher walls with view-ports and shooting ports in them; and he should fill moats with posts, crocodiles, and fish. There should be *kaḍaṅga** doors so the people of the city can breathe freely, and these should be guarded absolutely, like gates. He should always have heavy apparatus positioned over the gates; he should have deadly "hundred-killers" set in place. He should make sure these things are kept under firm control.° He should have logs brought in and wells dug; wells dug previously he should have purified by those who will
45 use the water. He should have thatched houses smeared with mud, and in the month of Caitra† he should remove straw from the city because of the danger of fire. The king should allow meals to be cooked only at night; no fire should burn in a house during the day, excepting one for the Agnihotra. Fire can burn if kept in rooms that have been made safe by workmen; it should be kindled after one has entered those houses. The king should impose a heavy punishment on anyone who has a fire in the day, and he should make a public example of him for the protection of the city. He should put out of the city wandering mendicants, carters, drunkards, madmen, and actors, for otherwise these may be a weakness to the city.

50 The king should set spies of appropriate rank and social Order everywhere—at crossroads, at bathing shrines, in assembly halls, and hostels. The king should have the royal roads made very wide, and he should direct that cisterns and bazaars be built in accordance with proper designs for them; and treasuries, armories, granaries, stables for horses and stables for elephants, barracks for troops, moats, the roads through villages, and alleyways in towns. But no one at all should observe these secret matters, Yudhiṣṭhira.

And the king who is troubled by an enemy army should store
55 provisions—oil, honey, ghee, grains, and medicines. He should make stores of charcoal, *kuśa* grass, and *muñja* grass, leaves, reeds, and trees, fodder and kindling, and poison arrows. The king should make stores of all sorts of weapons, such as spears, lances, darts, and armor. He should especially assemble every kind of medicinal herb, and roots and fruits, and the four kinds of physicians. Actors, dancers, athletes, and magicians should adorn the capital city everywhere and offer entertainment.

Whoever may be suspect—whether retainers, ministers, townsfolk, or
60 even a king—he should make sure they are in his control. When some task has been done well, O lord of kings, he should honor its doer with

* Meaning unknown; perhaps a mat of straw; see endnote at 69.42.
† The month overlapping the Gregorian March and April and marking the beginning of the hottest time of the year.

heaps of riches, honors appropriate to the man's status, and various gracious words.

Having made his enemy give up, or having slain him, O joy of the Kurus, the king has discharged his debts as they are listed in the Learned Teachings.

Pay attention to me—there are seven things the king must protect: Himself, his ministers, his treasury, his army, his allies, the people of the kingdom, and the city, O joy of the Kurus. The kingdom, made up of these seven elements, must be guarded carefully.

O tiger among men, he who knows the six measures of foreign policy,* the group of three, and the further Group of Three uses and enjoys this earth.

65 About the "six measures" that were mentioned, pay attention to this, Yudhiṣṭhira: sitting in place after concluding a treaty, concluding a treaty by means of marching on an expedition, sitting in place after making war, and after undertaking an expedition, dividing the army in two, and relying upon others.

About the group of three that was mentioned, listen to this with your mind focused: decrease, stasis, and increase. And hear too the further Group of Three—Law, Profit, and Love. These are to be pursued each at its time. Really, by doing Meritorious, Lawful Deeds, the king guards the earth for a long time.

Aṅgiras† himself has sung two stanzas on this matter; you should learn them now, O son of Yādavī.‡ Blessings upon you.

70 "Doing all your duties, protect the earth perfectly. Having guarded his citizens this way, one thrives happily in the next world.

"What good is a king's asceticism? what good his sacrifices?—if all his subjects are unprotected and deprived of Lawful, Meritorious Deeds."

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

70.1 There is the policy for administering the royal rod of punishment and there is the king—what do the two of these do together for success? And whose success? Tell me this, grandfather.

Bhīṣma said:

Listen to me, Bhārata king, as I duly lay out for you—with well-turned words and arguments—just how illustrious the policy of royal punishment is.

When it is properly applied by the master, the policy for administering the rod of punishment binds each of the four Orders of society to its own

* See 12.57.16 and the endnote to it.
† = a Vedic seer, the father of Bṛhaspati.
‡ = Kuntī.

particular Law and keeps them from doing Lawless Deeds. When the four Orders stay in the Laws proper to each, when there is no intermixing of their laws, when security prevails through the policy of royal punishment, when subjects feel perfectly safe, then the three Orders perform the Soma rites diligently according to the prescriptions—realize that the happiness of Gods and humans is assembled from them.*

"Either the Time† is the cause of the king, or the king is the cause of the Time."

Have no doubt about this, the king is the cause of the Time. When the king acts in full and perfect accord with the policy for administering royal punishment, then the most excellent Time, called the Kṛta Age, occurs. In the Kṛta Age there can be only Lawful Deeds; Lawless Deeds do not occur anywhere. None of the Orders of society indulges itself in Unlawful Work‡ then. People enjoy prosperity then, no doubt of that, and the Vedic rituals performed suffer no defects. All the seasons of the year are pleasant and wholesome; sounds, colors, and ideas appear clear and distinct to people. There are no diseases then, and none die young; there are no widows; and no cruel beings are born. The earth produces crops without tilling, and herbs grow likewise; the bark, leaves, fruit, and roots of plants and trees are vigorous. Lawless Action is unknown then; there is nothing but Meritorious, Lawful Action. Understand, Yudhiṣṭhira, that these are the attributes of a Kṛta Age.

When the king discards a fourth of the policy of royal punishment and follows only three fourths of it, then the Tretā Age occurs. A quarter portion of bad fortune follows behind the three portions of good. The earth produces crops only when plowed, and herbs grow likewise. When the king abandons half the policy of punishment and follows only half of it, then the time called Dvāpara occurs. Then a half of bad fortune follows behind two quarters of good. The earth produces crops when tilled, but the yield is small. When the king abandons the policy of punishment completely, then Kali enters and torments creatures with dissension. In the Kali Age there is mostly Lawless Action, but there are Meritorious, Lawful Deeds in some places. All the Orders of society become averse to doing their proper Law. Śūdras live on alms, and brahmins live by service; prosperity vanishes, and there is mixing of the social Orders. Vedic rites are defective, and all the seasons are unpleasant and laden with ill-health. People's sounds, colors, and ideas fade. There are diseases, and the energy of life leaves people and they die. There are widows, and cruel creatures are born.

* = the Soma rites.
† Either the king determines the Age (Kṛta or Kali or one in between) or vice-versa.
‡ = *adharma*, rendered as "Lawless Deeds" above.

Parjanya rains only in some places; crops grow only in some places. All moisture dries up when the king does not wish to protect his subjects properly and is not intent on the policy for administering punishment.

25 The king is the creator of the Kṛta Age, and the king is the cause of the Tretā and the Dvāpara and the Fourth Ages too. For bringing about a Kṛta Age, a king attains endless heaven. For bringing about a Tretā Age, a king attains heaven, but it is not endless. For initiating a Dvāpara Age, a king attains what corresponds to his portion.* For initiating a Kali Age, a king attains endless evil. Thus an evil-doing king dwells in the hell Naraka everlasting years; sunk in the mire of his subjects' evil, he finds disgrace and evil.

The kṣatriya who understands the policy for administering punishment and always puts it first should try to win realms not already his and guard well those that are.

30 The law† that nurtures the world and fashions the boundaries of the world like a mother and father is the policy for the royal rod of punishment properly administered. Realize, bull of the Bharatas, that it is this‡ that allows beings to thrive. This is the supreme Law: That the king be dedicated to the policy of administering punishment.

Therefore, Kaurava, be dedicated to this policy and watch over your subjects. Acting this way and protecting your subjects, you will win heaven that is so hard to win.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

71.1 O you who know proper behavior, what conduct should a king employ as king that he might easily attain those things that give rise to happiness here and after death?

Bhīṣma said:

Here are thirty-six attributes joined with thirty-six other attributes; if a king endowed with good attributes puts them into action he should attain excellence.

He should do his Lawful Duties without resentment. He should give off affection. He should not be a Naysayer. He should pursue riches without being cruel. He should engage in Love without being excessive. He should speak pleasantly without being obsequious. He should be a valiant man without being a braggart. He should be generous without giving to

5 unworthy recipients. He should be bold but not rough. He should not conclude treaties with ignoble men. He should not wage war against his kin. He should not have unreliable men sent spying. He should not perform his duty because he is coerced. He should not speak of riches among those who are not strictly observant. He should not speak of his own good

* = his lot—basically, his karma.
† = *maryādā*.
‡ = the proper administration of punishment.

qualities. He should not take from the strictly virtuous. He should not trust a man who is not a strict observer. He should not mete out punishment before careful examination. He should never make public the advice he has received. He should not give things to the covetous. He should not trust criminals. He should guard his wife without jealousy. The king should be clean, but not compulsive. He should not engage in sex excessively. He should not consume sweets that are unhealthy. He should honor those that are respected without begrudging it. He should wait upon his teachers without dissembling. He should worship the Gods without hypocrisy. He

10 should pursue Royal Splendor, but not in any contemptible way. He should serve even after losing the inclination to do so. He should be industrious, but never unmindful of the moment. He should speak kindly, but not for the purpose of using people. He should not insult a man while apparently treating him kindly. He should not attack his enemies without analyzing carefully. Having attacked his enemies, he should spare none. He should not be enraged without cause. He should not be gentle with those who oppose him.

Act this way while you govern, if you want what is best in this world. The king who does otherwise ends up in extreme danger.

Whoever pursues all these good qualities as I have declared them to you will experience wonderful good fortune in this life and will delight in heaven after death.

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

* After he had heard Śāṃtanava's statement, king Yudhiṣṭhira,
surrounded by the chief Pāṇḍavas, praised the grandfather.
The intelligent king then did what Bhīṣma had told him.

(84h) Kings and Brahmins

12.72–79 (B. 71–78; C. 2715–2961)
72 (71; 2715). Yudhiṣṭhira asks how the king can avoid constant anxiety without violating Law. Bhīṣma starts by advising that the king should install virtuous brahmins in his palace, make use of a chaplain, and procure the blessings of brahmins. He then advises pursuing Riches with rectitude and intelligence, and making good appointments (1–5). He must adhere to Law in collecting revenues from the kingdom, not taxing too heavily or in wrongful ways (10–20). The king may expropriate the wealth of non-brahmins when in dire

* A final, classical, jagatī triṣṭubh stanza.

straits, but he should never use the wealth of brahmins for public purposes, should never envy brahmins their wealth, and should give wealth to them as he is able (20). Protecting his subjects constantly and governing them diligently with Law is the king's highest Lawful Duty and the highest form of kindness. The king who rules this way is free of anxiety, gains Merit, and enjoys Luxurious Splendor in heaven (20–35).

12.73–76 (B. 71–75; C. 2715–2868) (84h–1) The Necessary Complementarity of Kṣatriyas and Brahmins.

12.77–79 (B. 76–78; C. 2869–2961) (84h–2) Good and Bad Brahmins and the King's Responsibilities toward Them.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

72.1 How is the king not constantly anxious as he protects his subjects? And how does he not offend against Law. Tell me this, grandfather.

Bhīṣma said:

Son, I will tell you in abbreviated form the Laws that are known with certainty, for one would never reach the end of the Laws in an extensive account.

You should get venerated brahmins with excellent qualities, who are thoroughly devoted to Law,.who are highly learned, and who are dedicated to Vedic observances to live in your house.

Then you should perform all your ritual duties with your court priest, after rising to meet him, clasping his feet, and greeting him.

5 After finishing your Lawful duties and after reciting auspicious formulas, you should have the brahmins pronounce blessings for victory, success, and wealth.

Possessing a full measure of rectitude, firmness, and intelligence, the king should take hold of wealth to get wealth, and he should shun love and anger. The king who pursues wealth while giving precedence to love and anger is a childish fool who takes hold of neither Lawful Merit nor wealth.

You must not, from love, appoint men who are avaricious, or men who are fools, to oversee affairs of business. Appoint men who are not greedy and who are fully endowed with intelligence to all tasks. For a fool set over business affairs who is not skilled in the things that must be done, who is full of his own likes and dislikes, plagues the king's subjects with wrong policies.°

10 You should seek to gain revenues through taxes of a sixth portion, through customs, through the punishment of wrongdoers, and through fees as calculated from the Learned Teachings. Having caused the country

to remit a Lawful tax that is regular and in accordance with prescribed rules, the king should never flag in creating universal prosperity.

People are devoted to a king who is a herdsman, who is generous, who is constant in observing Law, who never wearies, who is not bound by his own likes and dislikes.

You must not seek to gain revenues through any Unlawful acquisitions. The Lawful Merit and the wealth of a king who commits himself to policies that deviate from the Learned Teaching are insecure. The king who commits himself to policies deviating from the Learned Teachings does not accumulate any reserves. In a bad situation all his wealth is wiped

15 out. The king, whose very foundation is wealth, harms his own self when in delusion he oppresses his subjects with taxes not countenanced in the Learned Teachings. A man who cuts open the cow's udder to get milk gets no milk. So a country that is plagued with bad policies does not grow prosperous. Indeed, he who attends upon the cow gets milk regularly, so he who exploits a country in a methodic way gets results. And the country that is well protected and exploited in a methodic way regularly produces unequalled growth of the treasury, Yudhiṣṭhira. As a contented mother regularly gives her milk to her own and to others, so the earth, when well

20 protected, yields grain, gold, and offspring to the king.° Be like a maker of garlands, king, not like a charcoal-burner. Disciplining yourself this way, you will be able to use and enjoy the country for a long time as you watch over it.

Should your wealth be used up as an enemy army marches toward you, then you may, with conciliatory negotiations, take what wealth there is among non-brahmins. But do not let your mind be stirred upon seeing wealthy brahmins, Bhārata, not even when your situation is most dire; how much less when you are flourishing. You should give them riches as you are able, and as is appropriate to their deserts, addressing them warmly and guarding them well. Thus will you reach heaven, which is so hard to win.

O joy of the Kurus, protecting your subjects this way with Lawful

25 conduct, you will gain auspicious Merit that is laden with glory. Protect your subjects with Lawful judicial procedures, Pāṇḍava, and disciplining yourself this way, Yudhiṣṭhira, you will not be plagued with anxiety.

This is the highest Duty of Law, that a king protect his subjects, as indeed the highest kindness is keeping his subjects in the doing of their Law.° Likewise, those who are experts in Law think it is the highest Law, because a king intent upon guarding is doing a kindness to beings.

When a king fails to protect his subjects from danger for just one day, it takes a thousand years for him to reach the end of that evil. But when he guards his subjects Lawfully for a single day, then for ten thousand years in

30 heaven does he enjoy the fruit of the good he has done. In just one instant

the king who guards his subjects Lawfully reaches those heavenly worlds that one wins by having offered worship with sacrificial rites, by having faithfully recited the Vedas, and by having endured great ascetic suffering.

O son of Kuntī, carefully guarding the Good Law this way, you will acquire the fruit of your good works in this life and you will not be plagued with anxiety. You will go on to tremendous Luxurious Splendor in heaven, Pāṇḍava.

In the places where there are no kings, there is no possibility of Meritorious, Lawful Deeds such as these; therefore, it is the king and no one else who can acquire this great fruit.

Lawfully guarding this rich kingdom you have acquired, refresh Indra with Soma, and refresh those people who are your friends with their desires.

(84h-1) *The Necessary Complementarity of Kṣatriyas and Brahmins*

12.73–76 (B. 71–75; C. 2715–2868)

73 (72; 2749). Bhīṣma relates The Dialogue of King Aila Purūravas and Wind *on the subject of the relationship of kings and brahmins. Purūravas asked Wind where brahmins and the other three Orders of society came from. Wind stated that the brahmin came from the mouth of Brahmā, the kṣatriya from his arms, the vaiśya from his thighs, and the śūdra from his feet (1–5). The brahmin is the lord of all beings and guardian of the treasury of Lawful Deeds; the kṣatriya is the guardian of the earth and the wielder of the rod of punishment; the vaiśya provides wealth and food; and the śūdra should serve them (5). Purūravas asked to know to whom the earth belonged. Wind answered that everything on the earth belongs to the brahmin. The brahmin is the senior, and the kṣatriya the junior; kings should rely upon the guidance of a virtuous brahmin. Carrying out Law as expounded to him by a good brahmin, the king will gain great glory and one quarter part of the Merit of his subjects' Lawful Deeds (5–20). All kinds of beings (the Gods, ancestors, etc.)*

depend upon the Rites of Law in the king's realm. The most valuable grant the king may give is the gift of safety to his subjects (20–25).

74 (73; 2775). Bhīṣma states that the root of all Meritorious, Lawful Deeds is the complementarity of the brahman *and the* kṣatra*; so the king should have a virtuous and learned brahmin as his court priest and cooperate with him fully (1–5). He then recites a conversation between King Aila and the brahmin Kaśyapa. Aila asked what happens when the* brahman *abandons the* kṣatra*, or vice versa. Kaśyapa responded that the country goes awry when that happens, and he emphasized that those two principles must support each other (5–10). When brahmins or kings do not strictly observe their Duties, there are various calamities in the kingdom. Evildoers provoke the God Rudra into appearing, and he slays everyone, good and evil alike (10–15). Aila asked about Rudra, and Kaśyapa said that Rudra is the Self in the heart of people, that he slays his own and others' bodies, that he operates like the wind or fire, touching the good and the wicked alike (15–20). Aila asked why the virtuous are destroyed along with the wicked. Kaśyapa explained that that happens because the virtuous have not spurned the wicked, are mixed in with them, so are harmed along with them. But the fates of the good and the wicked vary dramatically after death (20–25). The king should appoint an erudite brahmin as his court priest and be consecrated as king by him. The brahmin is the first-born of all and the rightful owner of everything (25–30).*

75 (74; 2808). Bhīṣma states that a country thrives when the brahman *calms the people's fear of what is not seen, and the king calms their fear of what is seen. He then relates* The Dialogue between the Kings Mucukunda and Vaiśravaṇa. *The world-conquering king Mucukunda challenged the armies of Vaiśravaṇa, and the latter's Rākṣasa monsters began to slaughter the former's army. Mucukunda blamed his court priest, Vasiṣṭha, who then did fierce asceticism and drove the monsters away (1–5). Vaiśravaṇa then chided Mucukunda for relying on a brahmin, rather than on his own might, as ancient kings had done. Mucukunda angrily told him of the primordial complementarity between brahmins and kṣatriyas (5–15). Vaiśravaṇa then offered Mucukunda rule of the entire earth, but Mucukunda refused to accept such rule as a gift, insisting upon winning it with force of arms (15).*

Bhīṣma concludes by reiterating the need for complementarity between the brahmin and the kṣatriya (15–20).
76 (75; 2831). Yudhiṣṭhira asks what royal conduct is good for the king's subjects. Bhīṣma says a king should be generous, worship the Gods, and perform ascetic practices while guarding his subjects with the Good Law. The king then gets a quarter of the Merit of his subjects, and he gets some or all of their evil if he fails to do these things (1–5). The king must guard his subjects' wealth from thieves, especially the wealth of the brahmins, and he must honor and gratify the brahmins (10). He cannot be indulgent of his desires, duplicitous, malicious, or avaricious (10).

Yudhiṣṭhira bolts once again. Saying that he has acquiesced to become king only because of Law, but that in fact there is no Law in kingship, he announces again the intention to go to the forest where he can worship Law (15). Bhīṣma answers Yudhiṣṭhira this time. He counsels that there is no great accomplishment without some cruelty. He reproaches Yudhiṣṭhira for not acting like his father or ancestors. The wisdom Yudhiṣṭhira follows is not one either of his parents wanted for him. He was born to the Law of kingship, and it would be Lawless for him to act otherwise. Bhīṣma praises action over inaction and persistence in the face of difficulty. Pointing to the need that people have for the work of a king, Bhīṣma praises kingship as the most rewarding behavior Yudhiṣṭhira could do (15–35).

Bhīṣma said:

73.1 The king should commission as his court priest one who can protect the pious and crush those who are not. On this they recite this ancient account of the dialogue between Aila Purūravas* and Wind.

Aila said:

From what is the brahmin born? And from what the other three social Orders? And why is the one better? Tell me this, O Wind.

Wind said:

It is said the brahmin was created from the mouth of Brahmā, the kṣatriya from his two arms, and the vaiśya from his thighs, O most
5 excellent of kings. A fourth Order, the śūdra, was later formed from his feet for the purpose of serving the first three Orders, O bull among men.

The brahmin was born just after Earth; and just by virtue of his having

* = the first offspring of Ilā, the founder of the lunar dynasty of kings; see the LCP and Appendix 3, Chart 1; according to *MBh* 1.70.18, he made war on brahmins during his rule.

been born, he is the lord over all beings to guard the treasury of Meritorious, Lawful Deeds. Then he* made the second Order to guard people; the kṣatriya, the wielder of the royal rod of force and guardian of Earth. The vaiśya should support the three Orders with wealth and grain. The śūdra should serve them. Thus did Brahmā ordain.

Aila said:

To whom does this earth belong, to the brahmin because of Law or to the one who is nominally a kṣatriya with his wealth? Tell me this truly, Wind.

Wind said:

10 Whatever there is upon this earth, it all belongs to the brahmin. Those versed in Law believe this because the brahmin is the firstborn and the noblest born. The brahmin consumes only what is his, wears only what is his, and gives only what is his. He is the teacher of all the Orders of society. He is the eldest and most excellent twice-born man. As a woman, on the demise of her husband, makes his younger brother her husband, so Earth makes the kṣatriya her husband because he is immediately after the brahmin.

This is the first rule for you, if you seek the highest place in heaven from performing Lawful Deeds; it would be otherwise in a time of distress:

> Whoever conquers a land should convey it to a brahmin who is learned,
> 15 behaves correctly, knows Law, performs asceticism, is satisfied with his own Lawful Duty, is not obsessed with riches—a brahmin who might guide the king with his consummate understanding of everything.

A brahmin born of a good family who is sophisticated and trained to talk well speaks scintillating wisdom and guides the king to what is best. When a king dedicated to the performance of the *kṣatra* Law—a king inclined to listen, one not conceited—carries out the Good Law expounded to him by a brahmin, then that sophisticated man will bask in glory for a long time because of that. And his court priest has a share of all the Lawful Merit.

All people who have betaken themselves to a king like this behave rightly, are fixed in doing their own particular Lawful Deeds, and fear
20 nothing from any quarter. The king gains a quarter part of the Merit of any Lawful Deed people do in his realm when he protects them rightly.

Gods, humans, ancestors, Gandharvas, serpents, and Rākṣasas all live upon the offerings of sacrificial worship; and nothing is offered in a country without a king. So the Gods and the ancestors live upon food that is given to them, and the property for performing those Rites of Law° is based upon the king.

* = Brahmā.

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In the summer one happily puts himself in the shade, or in water, or in a breeze. In the winter one happily approaches a fire, or goes out into the sun, or enters his house.

One's mind delights in sound, touch, taste, form, and smell; in all these 25 enjoyments only he who is not afraid feels the pleasure. He who gives the gift of safety gets a very great fruit, for there is no other gift in all the three worlds as valuable as life.

The king is Indra, the king is Yama, the king is Dharma. The king displays different forms. Everything here is supported by the king.

Bhīṣma said:

74.1 The king should make a highly learned expert his court priest after carefully considering that limitless pair—Lawful Merit and Profit—side by side.

Things go well in every way for people when their king's court priest knows Law and is always mindful of Law, and when their king has the same virtues.

The two of them make people, ancestors, and the earlier and later Gods prosper when they are united in a commitment to the Good Law, are trustworthy, full of the heat of ascetic suffering, are friends of each other, esteem each other, and are of like mind. The king's subjects gain happiness 5 and ease from the mutual regard of the *brahman* and the *kṣatra.* But if they despise each other, the subjects perish. For the *brahman* and *kṣatra* together are said to be the root of all Meritorious, Lawful Deeds.

Here they recite the ancient account of the dialogue of King Aila* and the brahmin seer Kaśyapa. Pay attention to this, Yudhiṣṭhira.

Aila said:

> † When the *brahman* abandons the *kṣatra,* or when the *kṣatra* abandons the *brahman,* who are the ones who consequently take power there? And who are the ones who shun the absence of power there?

Kaśyapa said:

> The country of a kṣatriya where the *brahman* and the *kṣatra* are opposed goes awry. Barbarians consequently take power there; the pious, strictly observant people shun the absence of power there.
>
> These people's bulls are not robust, their cows are not spry, their churns do not throb, they do not worship with the rites of sacrifice, and their sons do not study the Veda, when kṣatriyas forsake the *brahman.*
>
> 10 And when brahmins forsake kṣatriyas, the bulls are not at all robust in their houses, they do not study the Veda with their offspring, nor do they worship with the rites of sacrifice; they degenerate and become barbarians.

These two are forever joined in mutual support. The *kṣatra* is the womb of the *brahman,* the brahmins are the womb of the *kṣatra.*

> These two, constantly relying upon each other, create the great foundation of Royal Splendor. If their ancient union is split, everything becomes completely muddled.
>
> Then someone crossing to the other side of a river finds no raft; he is like a boat driven up onto a large sandbar. The system of four social Orders becomes completely muddled, and people end up in ruin.

When the tree of the *brahman* is protected, it showers down honey and gold, but when it regularly goes unprotected, it showers down tears and evil.

> 15 When a brahmin who has not formally studied the Veda, who has abandoned his particular tradition of Veda study, seeks salvation in the Veda, then the God rains down in strange ways, and calamities invade that place constantly.
>
> Anywhere a wicked man might kill a woman, or a brahmin, and then listen to a report of it in the court assembly and have no fear of being close to the king, then danger arises for the kṣatriya.
>
> When evil is being done beyond measure by evil men, then the God Rudra arises. Evil men make Rudra come to be with their evil deeds, and he then slays everyone, the virtuous and wicked alike.

Aila said:

> From where does Rudra come? What sort of being is Rudra? It is beings that are seen to kill other beings. You are learned, Kaśyapa, tell me this: Where does this God Rudra come from?

* In all likelihood Purūravas once again, though any descendant of Ilā is possible.

† The bulk of this chapter consists of twenty Vedic-style triṣṭubh stanzas.

Kaśyapa said:

Rudra is the Self in the heart of men; he slays his very own body and the bodies of others. They say Rudra is like the prodigious movements of the wind, and his manifest form looks like forest fires or clouds.

Aila said:

20 No one can contain the wind!° No cloud rains within people, nor is any forest-fire seen operating that way in men. It* is bound or becomes free because of his own desires and aversions.

Kaśyapa said:

As Jātavedas† blazing in a single house might quickly burn down an entire village, so does this God cause confusion; so all are affected by the good and evil deeds of some.°

Aila said:

If punishment affects someone entitled to reward—especially while evil is being done by others who are evil—then what reason would anyone have to do what is good? And what reason would anyone have not do what is wrong?

Kaśyapa said:

The same punishment affects those who do no evil because they have not spurned the evil-doers, because they are mingled with them. Wet wood is burned along with dry because it is mingled with it. There should be no mingling at all with evildoers.

Aila said:

The earth supports the virtuous and the wicked alike, the sun warms them both alike, the wind blows upon them both alike, and waters carry the both of them along.

* = the Self, or soul, in people.
† = Agni.

Kaśyapa said:

25 So it goes in this world. But it does not go like this in that one, O son of kings. After death there is a wide difference between the one who does good and the one who does evil. The world of the good man is honeyed and shines with the luster of ghee and the glint of gold; it is the navel of immortality. A celibate student of the Veda° delights there after death—there is no death there, none of the decay of old age, nor any misery. The world of the wicked is a hell without light; it is always painful, and the pain is chiefly sorrow. The evil-doer grieves for himself as he falls for many years without touching bottom.

When the brahmin and kṣatriya are split off from each other, creatures enter into dreadful misery. Understanding this, the king should make a learned man, a man with more than a single expertise, his court priest.

And that one then should consecrate him*—thus the Rule is prescribed.

The brahmin is declared to be foremost of all in this world on the basis of 30 Law. Those who know Law know that the brahmins were created first of all. All that is later belongs to him because he is first-born and noble. So the brahmin is to be respected and honored, and he consumes the best of what comes. All that is best or most highly preferred is to be offered to the brahmin, according to Law.

This must absolutely be done by a king, even by a mighty one. The *brahman* makes the *kṣatra* prosper, and the *brahman* prospers because of the *kṣatra*.

Bhīṣma said:

75.1 The welfare of a country is said to depend upon the king. And the king's welfare depends upon his court priest. That country thrives happily where the *brahman* quiets the subjects' fear of the unseen, and the king quiets their fear of what is seen with his two arms.

On this they cite the ancient account of a dialogue between Mucukunda and King Vaiśravaṇa.†

Having conquered this earth, King Mucukunda wanted to test his army, 5 so he attacked the king of Alakā.‡ King Vaiśravaṇa sent Rākṣasas down upon him, and those Rākṣasas set about grinding his troops down. When he saw his army being slaughtered, the enemy-taming King Mucukunda

* That is, the court priest should consecrate the king.
† = Kubera.
‡ = Kubera, also known as Vaiśravaṇa.

blamed his learned court priest. Then that supreme knower of the *brahman*, Vasiṣṭha, performed ferocious asceticism and drove those Rākṣasas away, and he found the path there for Mucukunda.

Then, as his armies were being slain, King Vaiśravaṇa appeared to Mucukunda and made this statement.

"Ancient kings mightier than you, who had court priests, did not behave as you are behaving here. Those kings, who were certainly skilled shooters and were surrounded by armies, came and paid homage to me as the lord of comfort and misery. If you possess manly power in your arms, then you should show it. Why do you depend on the power of a brahmin to such an extraordinary degree?"

Mucukunda, angry, then answered the lord of riches with this statement that was properly formed and clear and had no trace of anger.

"The *brahman* and the *kṣatra* were created by the Self-Existent one from the same womb. Each has a separate order of power, and that preserves the world. The power of asceticism and ritual formulas is fixed in the brahmins forever. The power of their arms and of weapons is fixed in the kṣatriyas forever. Subjects must be guarded by both of these in combination. You censure me, O lord of Alakā, as I act in accordance with this."

Vaiśravaṇa then said to the king with his priest, "Understand, king, that I do not assign to anyone kingship that has not been ordained for him; nor do I deprive anyone of what has been ordained. Rule this entire earth here, which I have now given to you."

Mucukunda said:

King, I do not want to enjoy kingship which you, sir, have given to me. I want to enjoy kingship that I have acquired through the manly force of my two arms.

Bhīṣma said:

King Vaiśravaṇa was utterly dumbfounded when he saw Mucukunda forthrightly committed to the Law of *kṣatra*. With complete devotion to the Law of *kṣatra*, King Mucukunda then governed the earth that he had acquired through the manly force of his arms.

So the king who knows the *brahman* and puts the *brahman* first wins land that has not been conquered and enjoys great glory.

The brahmin should always have water° and the kṣatriya should always have a weapon. Everything there is in the world depends upon these two.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

76.1 By what form of conduct does a king cause people to thrive and win blessed heavenly worlds? Tell me this, grandfather.

Bhīṣma said:

Bhārata, a king should be habitually given to making generous gifts, to worshiping with sacrificial rites, and to fasting and asceticism while he is devoted to watching over his subjects. He should guard all his subjects with the Good Law all the time. He should honor those who are dedicated

to Law energetically and without a moment's neglect. When the king honors Law, Law is honored everywhere, and whatever the king does pleases his subjects. His royal rod of force always lifted high, he should be like death to his enemies. He should cut barbarians down everywhere, he should not willingly tolerate any of them.

Bhārata, the king gets a quarter part of the Merit of whatever Lawful Deeds his subjects do while he protects them. When they recite the Vedas, worship with sacrifices, make generous gifts, or praise the Gods, the king enjoys a quarter part of it while he guards them Lawfully. And, Bhārata, the king gets a quarter part of the evil, whenever there is anything wrong in his country because he fails to guard his subjects. Also, others say he gets all of it. Furthermore, there is the determination that he gets half.

Hear now, king, how a cruel, even a lying king is freed from such sinful actions. If wealth stolen by thieves cannot be recovered, the king should compensate the victim from his own treasury, keeping enough for his own subsistence if he is not able to restore the whole amount.°

The property of the brahmins must always be protected by all the Orders of society; and the brahmins too. One should not stay in a realm where one may mistreat brahmins. For when the property of brahmins is being protected, everything is protected. When they have been made completely happy, then shall the king have done his duty.

As creatures depend upon the rain God Parjanya, as birds upon a great tree, people depend upon their king to make possible the accomplishing of all their goals. Indeed a king who is dedicated to the pursuit of pleasure, or whose mind is duplicitous, or who is malicious, or extremely avaricious is not able to watch over subjects.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

I have not sought the pleasures of kingship! I have not wanted kingship, not even for an instant! I acquiesced to kingship for the sake of Law, and yet there is no Law in it. So I have had enough of kingship where there is no Law. And I will just go to the forest in my desire to do Meritorious, Lawful Deeds. There in the fresh, verdant wilds, having lain down the royal rod of force, having conquered my senses, a sage eating only roots and fruits, I will worship the Good Law.

Bhīṣma said:

I know your mind has the quality of gentleness, but nothing great can be accomplished by gentleness alone. Also, people do not have much respect for you for being gentle, self-controlled, excessively noble, excessively concerned with what is Right by Law, a eunuch saddled with compassion because of your Virtue. Look to the Lawful Deeds of kings; these suited your father and grandfathers well enough. The behavior you want to commit yourself to now is not the behavior of kings. Really, if you refrain from this derangement-inspired gentleness, you will realize the fruits of doing Lawful Deeds, the fruit that comes from protecting subjects.

Neither Pāṇḍu nor Kuntī made the wish, son, that you have this wisdom, the insight with which you now act. Your father always said he wanted heroism, might, and courage for you. And Kuntī requested magnanimity, might, and nobility for you.

In the world of men and in that of the Gods, parents and Gods constantly demand of their sons regular offerings with "Svāhā" and "Svadhā."*

25 By your very birth you were born either to the Meritorious, Lawful Deeds of generous giving, Veda recitation, sacrificial worship of the Gods and guarding subjects, or to a Lawless life. O son of Kuntī, when the load has been piled onto the great ones† who are harnessed to the cart's tongue, their fame does not diminish with time, even if they do lose heart. When someone completely holds himself in check and carries a burden without ever missing a step, then, according to descriptions of faultless action, that would be perfection through action. When someone observant of Law stumbles, it is not absolutely disastrous, whether he be householder, king, or celibate student.

A small deed done that is noble and abounds in good is better than anything not done; there is nothing more evil than not acting.

30 When a well-born man who knows Law acquires the highest lordship, then, king, there is prosperity. It leads to general welfare. After a man mindful of Law acquires kingship, he should take hold all around—he should take hold of this one by giving generous gifts, this one by force, and this one with friendly talk. And, having acquired a king, learned experts who had been oppressed with the fear of penury, though born in good families, now wake up satisfied. What Law could be superior to this one?

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

What is more conducive to heaven than this? What joy is superior to this? What lordship is beyond this? Tell me if you think there is anything.

Bhīṣma said:

The greatest conqueror of heaven among us is he upon whom people depend completely and in whom they immediately find security. This is the

35 truth I tell you. Therefore you are the most joyful of the Kurus, O most excellent of the Kurus. Be the king. Win heaven. Protect the pious who are observant. Slay those who are not. Let your friends and the virtuous live in your train, the way creatures depend upon the rain God, Parjanya, the way birds live in a pleasant tree. Let people live in your train, a bold, heroic warrior who is not cruel, who has conquered his senses, and who shares the bounty with fond affection.

* = expressions accompanying offerings to the Gods and the ancestors, respectively; see the glossary.

† Text note: See the endnote at 76.26b.

(84h-2) *Good and Bad Brahmins and the King's Responsibilities toward Them*

12.77–79 (B. 76–78; C. 2869–2961)

77 (76; 2869). Yudhiṣṭhira asks about the proper and improper work of brahmins. Citing various occupations of brahmins, Bhīṣma distinguishes grades of brahmins: brahmins the equivalent of Brahmā, those who are the Gods among brahmins, those equal to kṣatriyas, those equal to vaiśyas, and those who are brahmins in name alone, who amount to śūdras (1–5). Mentioning more faults of brahmins (e.g., serving as the priest of an idol [devalaka], *going on long journeys), Bhīṣma recommends taxing and working such fallen ones. It is the king's Lawful responsibility to correct brahmins who engage in the wrong professions, especially by providing them adequate means of support. If they do not then change their ways, they should be expelled from the land (5–10).*

78 (77; 2883). Yudhiṣṭhira asks whose wealth the king controls and what the king's practice should be. Quoting the same Vedic text cited in the last chapter, Bhīṣma reaffirms the king's right to the wealth of all except proper brahmins. He reiterates the king's responsibility to make it possible for brahmins to live by an appropriate livelihood (1–5). He then recites a song sung by the pious king of the Kekayas as he was being carried off as a captive by a Rākṣasa monster. The king chanted to the monster the virtues of his subjects, his kingdom, and his rule. He emphasized especially the qualities of the brahmins of his kingdom and the support he gave them. He mentioned too the propriety of the other three social Orders in his kingdom, and then mentioned his support of the poor, women, and ascetics (5–20). The Kekaya king listed more of his good qualities and habits, and mentioned the good will his subjects had for him (20–25). Then the monster, praising the king's devotion to Law, and especially his regard for the brahmins, set the king free (25–30). Bhīṣma closes by reiterating that the king should protect brahmins and preclude their doing the wrong work (30).

79 (78; 2917). Mentioning that brahmins can live by the kṣatriya Law during times of exigency, Yudhiṣṭhira asks if

they are ever allowed to live by the vaiśya Law. Bhīṣma answers that a brahmin may do so, that he may even resort to agriculture. He excludes spirits, salt, cattle, and cooked food from the items a brahmin is allowed to sell (1–5). Bhīṣma cites the ancient Law of commerce: "I shall give you this, you must give me that" (5–10). Bhīṣma then states that the prosperity of a country depends upon the different Orders of society fulfilling their proper works. Barbarian invasions should be forcibly opposed to resist lawlessness and decay (10–15). And if the kṣatriyas should become offensive toward Law, the brahmins might resist and chastise them, resorting even to duplicity and weapons (15–20). Anyone who takes up weapons and risks life to defend Law and brahmins gains great merit. Circumstances can transform what is Unlawful into Law, allowing even brahmins to commit wicked acts (25–30). Bhīṣma allows that even a vaiśya or a śūdra might become the leader or refuge of a Lawful society to protect it against barbarians (30–35). Bhīṣma closes by reaffirming the ideal that brahmins and kṣatriyas should each do their proper duty (40).

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

77.1 Some brahmins are engaged in their proper work, while others do the wrong work. Tell me about the difference between these brahmins, grandfather.

Bhīṣma said:

Those men who manifest perfectly the marks of learning, who look to the Vedic texts on every matter, are the equivalent of Brahmā, king, and they are celebrated as "brahmins." Those who are perfectly accomplished as ritual priests or teachers and carry out their proper works are the equivalent of the Gods among brahmins. Those who serve as priests, court priests, advisors, ambassadors, or finance managers, king, are
5 the equivalent among brahmins of kṣatriyas. Those who mount horses, elephants, or chariots, or who serve as foot soldiers, are the equivalent among brahmins of vaiśyas, king. Those vile ones who have forsaken the work that is theirs by birth, who are brahmins in name alone, are the equivalent among brahmins of śūdras, king.

A king mindful of Law should make all brahmins who have no Vedic learning, or who have not installed the ritual fires, pay a tax and perform compulsory labor. Those who are couriers, who are priests for idols, who perform rites of worship to the constellations, who perform rites of worship to the village deities, and fifth, those who undertake great journeys are the equivalent of Caṇḍālas among brahmins.

If his treasury is low, the king should take a tax from them,* excepting
10 those who are the equivalent of Brahmā or the Gods. A Vedic text says, "The king is the owner of the wealth of those who are non-brahmins, and of those brahmins who do the wrong work." The king must never overlook those brahmins who do the wrong work. The king who wishes to promote Law must stop them and allot them a means of support. In the kingdom where a brahmin becomes a thief, people who know of it regard the offense to be the king's. King, those who know Law say, "If a brahmin who knows the Veda, or one who has completed a Vedic education, becomes a thief because of penury, he should be supported by the king." If, O scorcher of your enemies, after he has acquired the means to subsist, he should not reform, then he and his kin should be banished from that country.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

78.1 Over whose wealth does the king have control, O bull of the Bharatas? By what practice does he proceed? Tell me this grandfather.

Bhīṣma said:

A Vedic text says, "The king is the owner of the wealth of those who are non-brahmins, and of those brahmins who do the wrong work." The king must never overlook those brahmins who do the wrong work. This is what the strictly virtuous advocate as the ancient practice of kings.

They regard the wrong to be the king's offense when in a kingdom a
5 brahmin becomes a thief. Since they hold themselves to blame for that deed, all the royal seers have watched over the brahmins.

On this they recite an ancient account sung by the king of the Kekayas as he was being carried off by a Rākṣasa.

The Kekaya king was engaged in harsh vows in the wilderness when a dreadful Rākṣasa seized him while he was occupied in reciting the Veda.

The king said:

> In my country there is no thief, no vile person, no drunkard, no one who has not installed the sacrificial fires, no who does not worship the Gods. Why have you invaded my territory?
>
> In my realm there is no brahmin who is not learned, who does not perform special vows, who has not installed the sacrificial fires, nor any who does not drink the Soma. Why have you invaded my territory?
>
> 10 None in my realm worships with rites devoid of presents for the priests; and no one studies the Veda without observing the right vows. Why have you invaded my territory?
>
> The brahmins here carry out the six works: They study the Vedas and teach them, they perform rites of worship for themselves and officiate at the rites of others, they make and receive gifts. The brahmins of my

* That is, from brahmins generally.

kingdom are shown respect, and gifts are offered to them; they are gentle and truthful, and they carry out their proper work. Why have you invaded my territory?

The kṣatriyas of my kingdom carry out their proper work: They are well versed in the true Law, they ask for nothing, rather they give; they study the Vedas but do not teach them; they worship with sacrificial rites but they do not officiate at others' rites; they protect brahmins and they never run away in battles. Why have you invaded my territory?

15 The vaiśyas of my kingdom carry out their proper work: They earn their living from cultivation, cattle herding, and trade without deception; never negligent, always busy, very observant of special vows, truthful, they cultivate sharing, self-mastery, cleanliness, and friendship. Why have you invaded my territory?

The śūdras of my realm carry out their proper work: They properly wait upon the three Orders without resentment. Why have you invaded my territory?

I distribute wealth to all women who are impoverished, aged, or without a protector, or weak or afflicted. Why have you invaded my territory?

I never disrupt any of the Laws of particular clans or regions, Laws that have spread among them in the normal way. Why have you invaded my territory?

20 Ascetics in my realm are shown respect and are protected; they are received hospitably, and gifts are offered to them. Why have you invaded my territory?

I consume nothing without having shared it. I do not have sex with the women of other men. Self-possessed, I never play games. Why have you invaded my territory?

No one in my realm who is not celibate takes alms, nor is anyone who takes alms not celibate. In my realm there is no solemn sacrificial offering that is not made by a priest. Why have you invaded my territory?

I show no disrespect for the aged, the learned, nor ascetics. When the country is asleep I am awake. Why have you invaded my territory?

My court priest is fully accomplished in the recitation of the Veda, engages in ascetic practices, has knowledge of all Laws, is wealthy, and is the owner of the entire kingdom.

25 * I seek heavenly worlds by making generous gifts, by being truthful, and by protecting brahmins. I approach holy teachers and am eager to listen to them. I have no fear of Rākṣasas.

* Two Vedic-style triṣṭubh stanzas.

In my country there are no widows, no brahmins in name alone, no brahmins who are destitute, and none that is a thief, none who commits adultery, and none who is wicked. I have no fear of Rākṣasas.

There is not the tiniest spot on my body that has not been cut by the blade of a weapon as I have made war for the sake of Law. Why have you invaded my territory?

The people of my country always wish me good luck in cows, brahmins, and sacrificial rites of worship. Why have you invaded my territory?

The Rākṣasa said:

Since you heed Law in every circumstance, go on home, Kaikeya. Good
30 luck to you. I am leaving. O Kekaya, those who must protect cows and brahmins, those who have subjects to guard, have nothing to fear from Rākṣasas, let alone humans? They who have the brahmins in front of them, whose might is the might of the *brahman*, who hold guests dear, and their wives too, they are men who have won heaven.

Bhīṣma said:

So the king should protect brahmins. Really, when they are protected, they protect him in turn. The wish of kings ought to be that the country prosper in every way. So then, brahmins who do the wrong work, especially, must be stopped, and they must be allotted a means of support by the king in order to promote the welfare of his subjects. The king who conducts himself this way toward the people of the city and the countryside experiences many blessings and gains the same heavenly world as Indra.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

79.1 It has been clearly declared, Bhārata, that brahmins may live by the Law of *kṣatra* in times of distress. Is there any way a brahmin may live by the vaiśya Law, or not?

Bhīṣma said:

If he is not able to live by the Law of *kṣatra*, let him live by the vaiśya Law, taking to agriculture and cattle-tending when his living has been ruined in some disaster.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

When a brahmin is living by the vaiśya Law, what goods might he sell without being excluded from heaven?

Bhīṣma said:

Yudhiṣṭhira, under all circumstances a brahmin should exclude spirits, salt, sesame seeds, animals with manes, bulls, mead, and cooked food.
5 Upon selling these, son, a brahmin would go to the hell Naraka. The goat is Agni, the ram is Varuṇa, the horse is Sūrya, the cow is Earth; these and the cow, the sacrifice, and Soma must never, ever be sold. Strictly virtuous people do not countenance the bartering of raw food with cooked food, but

one may barter cooked food with raw in order to eat, Bhārata. "We will eat this when it has been prepared. Please, sir, prepare this." One who makes a deal with such an aim in mind never does Wrong.

Here I will tell you of the ancient Law of those who are engaged in commerce. Pay attention to this, Yudhiṣṭhira. "I give this to you, sir, and you, sir, must offer this." Law operates in that agreeable transaction, it does not occur by force. In this way the ancient transactions of the seers and others proceeded, and this was undoubtedly right.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

Now grandpa, when all the people abandon their own particular Laws and take up weapons, the power of the *kṣatra* dwindles away. The king then would not be the protector in the world. What would then be the final recourse? Speak to this doubt of mine at length, grandfather.

Bhīṣma said:

Each of the Orders of society, the brahmins first of all, would seek its own security through generous giving, ascetic observance, rites of sacrificial worship, benevolence, and self-control. Of these, those possessed of the power of the Vedas should exert themselves concertedly and make the king's might grow greater, the way the Gods did Great Indra's. They say the *brahman* is the final recourse when the king grows weak. Therefore, he who understands that should exert himself with the power of the *brahman*. But if a victorious king should bestow security upon the country, then the Orders should resume their proper works according to Law. But when barbarians have occasioned lawlessness and created a mixing together, then all the Orders should take up weapons and avoid sinking into decay.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

And if the *kṣatra* should become offensive toward brahmins in every way, what brahmin would then be its savior? What Law is there for that? What would be the final recourse?

Bhīṣma said:

That must be stopped then, both by using deceit and by not using it: By means of ascetic observances and celibacy, weapons and force. The *brahman* should put a stop to the *kṣatra* when it has grown haughty, especially when haughty toward brahmins, for the *kṣatra* originates in the *brahman*. Fire sprang from water, the *kṣatra* from the *brahman*, metal from stone: The all-pervading fiery energy of each comes to rest within its source. When metal cuts stone, or fire reaches water, or the *kṣatra* is hostile to the *brahman*, then these three come to rest. So when the invincible fiery energies and powers of the kṣatriyas are all stirred up, they come to rest in the *brahman*.

When the manly energy of the brahmins has softened, and that of the *kṣatra* is weak, and all the social Orders are inimical towards the brahmins in every way, then those wise and ardent men who give up their own lives and make war to protect brahmins and Law as well as themselves get the

blessed heavenly worlds. Taking up weapons on behalf of brahmins is prescribed for all the social Orders. Those heroes travel the course that goes the farthest, beyond the worlds of those who worship well with sacrificial rites and recite the Vedas well; beyond the worlds of the ascetics; beyond the worlds of those who enter into fasting unto death or into the fire. People know there is no other Lawful Duty than giving oneself up like this.*

Adoration! And blessings! to those who pour out their bodies as offerings to halt the enemies of the *brahman*. May we win the same heavenly worlds as they. Manu said those heavenly heroes had won the heavenly world of Brahmā.

As those who bathe at the final bath of the Horse Sacrifice are purified, so too the wicked and the virtuous alike who are killed with the blades of weapons in battle. Unlawful Deeds become Lawful, and Lawful Deeds become Unlawful, both on the basis of place and time. Place and time are like that. Amiable men do cruel deeds and win the highest heaven. Men devoted to Law do wicked deeds and travel the furthest course.

There are three occasions when a brahmin taking up weapons is not spoiled: to save himself; because there is something wrong with the Orders of society; or because of the constraints of a difficult situation.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

When a barbarian army has risen up, and there is a mixing of the social Orders for the sake of the *kṣatra* power—when the Orders are thoroughly confused—if some strong man other than a kṣatriya became dominant—a brahmin, a vaiśya, or a śūdra, O best of kings—and would protect the people from the barbarians by wielding the rod of force Lawfully, should he do that task or should he not? Should he be prevented, or not? Weapons are not obligatory for anyone but him born a kṣatriya.

Bhīṣma said:

If someone would serve as a further shore, when there is no further shore in sight; if someone would serve as a boat, when there is no boat at hand, he deserves respect in every way, whether he is a śūdra or something else. When people who have no protector or those oppressed by barbarians get protection and live as they like by relying upon someone, they ought joyfully to pay that man respect, as if he were a kinsman. He deserves respect, O scion of Kuru, as someone who repeatedly does great things.

What can one do with a bull that does not work? What with a cow that has no milk? What is the use of a barren wife? And what is the use of a king who does not protect?

Like an elephant made of wood, like a deer made of leather, like a wagon without a driver, like an alkaline field; so a brahmin who does not recite

* That is, in defense of brahmins.

the Veda, a king who will not protect, and a cloud that does not rain—they are all useless.

He who always guards those who are strictly observant and destroys those who are not should be made king; all that is here is supported by him.

(84i) The Servants of the King

12.80–86 (B. 79–85; C. 2962–3227)
80 (79; 2962). Yudhiṣṭhira asks what priests do and what sort of character priests should have. Bhīṣma says priests offer remedies and prophylaxis and then he lists various yogic virtues desirable in priests (1–5). Yudhiṣṭhira complains that the requirement to give priests presents after sacrifices is limitless and fails to take into account the sacrificer's ability to give. Bhīṣma criticizes the complaint and affirms that these presents are an essential part of the sacrifice (5–10). Yudhiṣṭhira criticizes the practice of sacrifice on three further points, and Bhīṣma rebuts each of them (10–15). Bhīṣma closes with exhortations to respect the authority of the Veda and the higher knowledge contained within it (15–20).
81 (80; 2983). Yudhiṣṭhira asks what sort of man a king should have for his minister. Bhīṣma lists the different kinds of friends a king has and counsels Yudhiṣṭhira always to be suspicious. He offers further counsel on the need to trust some and suspect others (1–20). He then lists a number and a variety of good features that the one(s) next to the king should possess, with some advice on competition and cooperation among several ministers (20–30). Bhīṣma points out that one's kinsmen are the most dangerous of all, and yet one needs kinsmen (30–35). Following these considerations leads to success and glory (40).
82 (81; 3024). Yudhiṣṭhira asks how the king makes his intentions known when his kinsmen and his connections are not under his control. Bhīṣma responds with The Dialogue of Vāsudeva and Nārada. *Making some of the points regarding a leader's kinsmen made in the last lesson, Kṛṣṇa confided to Nārada that his position of leadership in his tribal federation was weak, and that he suffered the abuse of his kinsmen. Kṛṣṇa asked for Nārada's advice (1–10). Nārada acknowledged Kṛṣṇa's difficulties and recommended that he exert leadership among the Yādava-Vṛṣṇis even though he could not be their king. He told Kṛṣṇa to silence his raucous kin with kindness and patience, and he exhorted him to pull the load of leadership over the rough political ground of the tribal confederation (10–20). Nārada concluded by emphasizing Kṛṣṇa's value for his tribe as he exhorted Kṛṣṇa to work hard to ensure the tribe's unity and survival (25–30).*
83 (82; 3055). Bhīṣma continues on this subject by reciting The Instruction of the Sage Kālakavṛkṣīya to King Kṣemadarśin of Kosala *on the subject of ministers who serve their masters badly. Kālakavṛkṣīya had wandered all over the kingdom of Kosala with a pet crow, inquiring into the misdeeds of the king's men, and receiving reports from crows on past, present, and future happenings (1–5). When visiting the king's court, Kālakavṛkṣīya made private accusations of wrongdoing against some of the ministers. The accused concluded that the crow was informing him, and they killed it (10–15). Fearing for his own life, Kālakavṛkṣīya went to the king, and, citing the dangers attendant upon being close to a king (15–30), he informed Kṣemadarśin of his wicked ministers. Saying that they sought to kill him, Kālakavṛkṣīya, now that they had killed his crow, he described the king's vulnerability to those with proximity to him (30–40). Chastising the king for retaining and rewarding wicked ministers, he criticized the kingdom of Kosala for punishing good men and rewarding evil ones (40–50). The king asked for the sage's guidance. Kālakavṛkṣīya counseled circumspection in getting rid of the ministers and pledged his loyalty to the king, as he had done to his father. Kṣemadarśin made Kālakavṛkṣīya his court priest (55–65).*
84 (83; 3126). Bhīṣma continues on the subject of the qualities of the king's councillors, commending men of various attributes that will serve him well in times of distress. The king cannot rely upon men who are base, stupid, cruel, and so on (1–10). He offers a full description of the best kind of man (10–15). More specific and detailed advice on choosing good men as ministers and avoiding unsuitable ones follows (15–25). He presents a list of attributes that disqualify men from knowing the counsel of the king (25–35) and a further list of the attributes of those who should hear it (35–40). The counsels of ministers are necessary for the welfare of the kingdom, and a king should have at least three ministers and should deliberate policy with them (40–50).
85 (84; 3183). Bhīṣma continues by reciting the dialogue between Bṛhaspati and Indra on the single most effective

policy. In response to Indra's question on that subject Bṛhaspati recommended kind speech as the key to a king's success at ruling (1–5). Indra heeded his advice and so should Yudhiṣṭhira (10).
86 (85; 3194). Yudhiṣṭhira asks how a king might gain everlasting glory for his administration of Justice. He expresses skepticism about ever finding in one man all the good qualities Bhīṣma has listed for ministers (1–5). Bhīṣma counsels that the king should consider judicial cases with a complement of four learned brahmins, three humble śūdras, and one elderly sūta *(5–10). Judicial decisions should be publicized, litigants should appear in person, and proceedings should always be public. If the judicial process is undermined by Injustice, the king and the kingdom will suffer grievously. The man appointed to administer Justice is the foundation of the Good Law itself, and he and the king both go to hell if they pervert it. The king should serve as the patron for people without protectors; eyewitnesses are superior to hearsay; and punishments should suit the crimes and the social position of the perpetrator. No Evil befalls the king for the appropriate administration of punishments (10–20). Bhīṣma next discusses the good traits required of messengers and, by extension, doorkeepers, sentinels, and bodyguards (20–25). He concludes with the qualities required of the commander in chief of the army (30).*

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

80.1 To what ends should the king's priests exert themselves? What kind of character should they have, grandfather? What sort of men are they, O Indra among kings? Tell me this, O best of speakers.

Bhīṣma said:

Remedies and preventatives are prescribed for the use of priests after they have first thoroughly understood the Vedic hymns and the Holy Learning of the twice-born.

They should be men who always take delight in just that one thing, who are wise, who never speak unkindly, who are friends of each other, well-respected, and regard all things the same. They should be men in whom there is gentleness, truthfulness, non-injury, asceticism, rectitude, kindness, no vanity, modesty, forbearance, self-control, and inner quiet.

5 A man who is modest, resolute in truth, self-controlled, does no injury to other beings, is free of desire and aversion, is endowed with the three bright virtues,° does no injury, is satisfied with knowledge alone—he is worthy of the throne of Brahmā.

These are the great priests, son, and they should all be duly honored.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

The command in the Veda which has been prescribed for presents for priests°—"It must be given, it must be given,"—never comes to an end. Nor is there any prescription regarding wealth from the Laws for times of distress,°* for that is outside the prescriptions.† The dreadful command in this prescription takes no account of the sacrificer's capability. The Holy Learning of the Veda says, "Holding fast to one's Trusting Surrender,° one should offer sacrificial worship." But what will Trusting Surrender accomplish in a sacrifice that is poorly endowed with presents?

Bhīṣma said:

10 No one attains anything great from insulting the Vedas, nor by dishonesty, nor by trickery. You should not have such thoughts. The presents are a part of the rite of worship, son; they are a reinforcement of the Vedas. Ritual formulas that lack these presents do not carry one across. The ability to give only one full pot would not be considered mean. So it is necessary, son, that the three Orders of society worship with the rites of sacrifice as prescribed.

"The Holy Learning of the Veda says,‡ 'Soma is the king of the brahmins,'° yet they want to sell it. This false livelihood is no good. Because of this, the rite of sacrificial worship is performed with Merit that has been sold."°

This is how this is explained in accordance with Law by the seers who expound Law: Man, sacrificial rite, and Soma should each go according to the rules. A man who does not go by the rules is of no value to another or himself.

15 "Holy Learning says, 'The body comprises the vessels of the sacrifice.'"°

Only those§ of brahmins with exalted minds are properly utilized.

"The highest Holy Learning says, 'Asceticism is better than sacrificial worship.'"°

I will tell you of this asceticism. Listen to me, learned expert. Non-injury, speaking the truth, kindness, self-control, compassion—the wise know that these are asceticism, not the drying up of the body.

Not taking the Vedas as an authority, transgressing commandments, having no absolutes anywhere°—these destroy one's spirit.

Pay attention, son of Pṛthā, to doctrines such as this one of the ten ritual pourers: "The mind is the spoon, what is thought is the ghee. . . ." Supreme knowledge is the purifying filter.

* = *āpaddharma.*

† That is, exceptions in times of distress require special consideration; they are "outside the prescriptions," precisely because the time of distress precludes the normal enactment of dharma and requires reasoning.

‡ Presumably it is Yudhiṣṭhira who objects again here and quotes the Veda (Holy Learning) twice more in the sequel.

§ = bodies.

20 Everything crooked is the track of death, straightness is the track of *brahman.*

This much is in the realm of the known, what will prattling on accomplish?

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

81.1 Grandfather, even the most trifling action is difficult for a person to accomplish by himself, so what about ruling a kingdom? What character, what behavior should an assistant for the king's affairs have? What sort of person should the king trust, and what sort should he not trust?

Bhīṣma said:

King, kings have four kinds of friends—one with the same goals, one who is attached by devotion, one who is a "born friend," and one who has been made a friend.

One who is ever mindful of Law is a fifth friend,° but he is not friend to just one or two. Wherever the Right is, there will he be, or he might be 5 neutral.The king should not reveal to this man any matter that would not please him, for kings seeking conquest act both Lawfully and Unlawfully.

"Of the four, the middle two are the best; the other two are always suspect."

All of them must always be suspected, a task which obviously belongs to the king himself. The king must never be careless about watching out for his friends, for people overwhelm a careless king

A wicked man becomes virtuous, a virtuous man becomes cruel, an enemy becomes an ally, an ally goes bad. Man's mind is inconstant, who could possibly trust him? So the king should do openly the major things that need to be done.

10 Now trusting anyone absolutely leads to the complete annihilation of one's Lawfulness and Success, while never trusting anyone is no different from death.

Trusting others is untimely death, for when one trusts others, he is ruined. He whom the king trusts lives only while the king wants him to live.

Therefore, the king should trust some and be suspicious of some. This is the way of policy, son, and it is everlasting success.

The man of whom the king might think, "After my demise the wealth coming in would fall to him," is the king's enemy according to wise men, and as such he must always be suspected.

When water goes from one man's field into the field of another, the first one will not break down his dikes as long as he does not want the water to 15 go down there. But when he fears too much water, then he wants to break them down. Should the king recognize someone in similar circumstances, he should designate him as an enemy.

When someone is not satisfied with the degree of the king's prosperity,

and would be severely dejected at the king's ruin, they say that is the sign of his best friend.

When the king can think of a man, "Upon my demise comes his demise," the king may trust him as if he were his own father.

As the king grows more prosperous, he should, in every way, as much as he is able, strengthen the man who always keeps him from being harmed, even in the case of works that are the king's Lawful Duties. The king should recognize in a man's being afraid of the king's being harmed the best indication of friendship. Whereas those who wish him harm are called his enemies.

20 The man who is constantly afraid of disasters, who is contented with the degree of the king's prosperity, such a friend as this is said to be equal to oneself.

Possessing good looks, good color, and a resonant voice; forbearing and free of resentment; from a good family and possessed of impeccable character should be the man right next to you. Intelligent, having a good memory, industrious, naturally kind, such a one never goes bad, whether he is honored or not. Whomever you would honor highest should stay in your home as a member of your household, whether he be a priest, a teacher, or an absolutely intimate friend. He would understand the best counsel for you and the true state of Lawfulness and Success in the kingdom. You should trust him like your father.

25 Two or three should not be set to work together, for they will not abide each other. Beings always divide when they have the same goal.

The man whose reputation is the most important thing to him, who abides by his agreements, who does not dislike able people, who in fact makes others able; who would not abandon what is Right from personal desire, fear, greed, or anger; who is industrious and highly articulate—he should be the man right next to you.

Men who are assertive, noble, learned, and adept in getting things done; who come from good families, have impeccable characters, and are forbearing and not resentful—you should make these your ministers and charge them with all your works. And they should be honored, given a 30 share of the wealth, given good assistants, and be well looked after. These should be put completely in charge of exemplary works; charged with great tasks, they produce the best results. They do their jobs always competing with each other. They carry out their projects consulting among themselves.

You should be fearful of your kinsmen as of Death, since a kinsman, like a little king himself, can never endure the king's success. O strong-armed king, no one but a kinsman rejoices at the demise of one who is upright, gentle, generous, modest, and speaks the truth. But to have no kinsmen is not very pleasant; nothing can be rated lower than that. His enemies 35 overwhelm the man who has no kinsmen. A kinsman is the last resort for a man who has been insulted by other men; a kinsman never tolerates

other men humiliating a kinsman. He recognizes himself as insulted, even if it is done by his own connections. There are good qualities in them, and the complete absence of good qualities is also observed in them. He who is not a kinsman does no favors, and he who is not a kinsmen shoots no poisoned arrows. Both kinds, the good and the bad, are seen among the ranks of kinsmen.

The king should respect and honor them* in word and deed. He should do them favors, and never annoy them. Among them he should always act as if he trusted them, even if he does not trust them. Neither fault nor virtue is ever observed in them unmixed.

40 When a man behaves this way and is never careless, his enemies grow quiet and even become his allies. The king who always moves this way in the circle of his kinsmen and his connections stands in glory and lordship over his friends and his enemies for a long time.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

82.1 If this circle° of his kinsmen and connections cannot be realized this way, how can his thought be projected onto his allies and enemies?

Bhīṣma said:

On this they recite this ancient account of a dialogue between Vāsudeva and the divine seer Nārada.

Vāsudeva said:

One who is not an ally ought not know the highest counsel, Nārada, nor should a friend who is not wise; nor should a wise friend who is not self-possessed. I am going to take advantage of your friendship for me and tell you something, Nārada. And, having searched the whole of my own mind, I will ask you something, O traveler to the third heaven.

5 I am a slave to my kinsmen by my claim to lordship. I only half enjoy the goods to be enjoyed, and I suffer verbal abuse. It pains my heart, as if someone trying to start a fire were spinning the fire drill. This verbal abuse burns me constantly, O seer of the Gods.

Saṃkarṣaṇa† always has might, and Gada‡ has tenderness, Pradyumna§ excels me in handsomeness, and I have no one who is my assistant, Nārada. And the other Andhaka-Vṛṣṇis, Nārada, are very prosperous, powerful, and hard to approach; they are perfectly successful by their own constant exertions. He who does not have them will perish; he who does have them has trouble.

Constantly solicited° by Āhuka‖ and Akrūra,# I do not favor either one

10 of them. What could be worse for someone than to have those two? Or

* I believe "them" here refers to the ministers in general, last mentioned above in 30.

† = Kṛṣṇa's older brother, Balarāma.

‡ = Kṛṣṇa's younger brother. § = Kṛṣṇa's son.

‖ Āhuka is a Yādava king, father of King Ugrasena, thus grandfather of Kaṃsa; the name may also refer to Ugrasena, "son of Āhuka."

\# = a prominent Yādava; Kṛṣṇa's uncle and ally; son-in-law of Āhuka.

what could be worse for someone than not to have those two? Great sage, I am like the mother of both the competitors in a game: If I wish victory for one, I am wishing defeat for the other. These two always torment me like this, Nārada; please tell me what is best for my kinsmen and myself.

Nārada said:

Crises are of two kinds, Kṛṣṇa, external and internal. They come about, O Vṛṣṇi, either caused by oneself or by another. This wretched crisis is internal to you, the product of your own actions.

15 For all those who share Akrūrabhoja's parentage are partisans of his, whether because of business interests, or out of some fancy, or as a tactic, or because of loathing.

The lordship you yourself attained* has been transferred to another,† and its foundations have been established, it now has a reputation, and there are ministers. Like food vomited up, you cannot take this back. In no way could anyone—especially, you, Kṛṣṇa, because of the danger of dividing your kinsmen—take over rule from Babhru‡ and Ugrasena. Should that come about through great effort, it would only be after very difficult deeds were accomplished, and there would be either general dwindling away until nothing is left or complete annihilation.

Ever polishing and refining its blade, remove all their tongues with the gentle weapon not made of steel that cuts to the heart.

Vāsudeva said:

20 How should I understand "the gentle weapon not made of steel," by which I, polishing and refining its blade, might remove their tongues?

Nārada said:

The weapon not made of steel is to always give as much food as you are able, and forbearance, tolerance, self-control, rectitude, and paying people the respect they are due. With your words, still the hearts, the talk, the minds of those kinsmen of yours so fond of saying harsh or teasing things.

No one who is not a great man, no one without presence of mind, no one without assistants takes on the general burden. Take it up and draw it with your chest. Every ox can draw a heavy load on level ground, but only a strong ox, the exemplar of his breed, can draw a hard load over rough, uneven ground as well.

25 Aggregations disappear when their components are separated. You are the principle component of this aggregation, Keśava. Act in such a way that this aggregation will not fall apart after it gains you. The tribal federation survives only with a wise man—in nothing other than his intelligence and forbearance, in nothing other than his restraint of his

* By killing the usurper Kaṃsa at Mathurā.

† The rightful Yādava king, Kaṃsa's father, Ugrasena, was restored to the throne; Kṛṣṇa's father Vasudeva had been Ugrasena's minister before Kaṃsa deposed and imprisoned Ugrasena.

‡ = a prominent Yādava, who had, evidently, become Ugrasena's minister *(sahāya)*.

senses, in nothing other than his giving up wealth. Furthering one's own party brings wealth, glory, and vitality and is a good thing to do. Kṛṣṇa, act so your kinsmen do not disappear. For the present and the future, Lord, there is nothing you do not know about conducting the six measures of foreign policy or arranging a military expedition. The Mādhavas,* Kukuras, Bhojas, and all the Andhakas and Vṛṣṇis, the people and the
30 lords of the people are all attached to you, O strong-armed man. Even the seers worship your mind, Mādhava. You are the teacher of all beings. You know what has come and what has gone. Resorting to you, the most excellent of the Yadus, your kinsmen enjoy happiness.

Bhīṣma said:

83.1 This is the way at first. Hear now the second way, Bhārata.

The king should protect any man whomsoever who might generate wealth.

Yudhiṣṭhira, if someone—whether a retainer of the king or not—should announce that the king's treasury is being depleted, is being spirited away by a royal minister, what he has to say should be heard in secret, and he should be protected from the ministers; for, Bhārata, ministers usually kill anyone who interferes with them. Those who plunder the king's treasury all work in concert to thwart the one who guards it, and that one perishes if he is not protected.

5 On this they recite this ancient account of what the sage Kālakavṛkṣīya said to the king of Kosala.

We have heard that the sage Kālakavṛkṣīya came to Kṣemadarśin after the latter had come to be overlord of the Kosalas. Always on the alert and looking for information, he had for some time past been traveling about in Kṣemadarśin's realm with a crow he kept in a cage. "I study the science of crows. Crows report to me on what will happen in the future, what happened in the past, and what is going on now," and thus he would inquire into the misdeeds of all the king's employees as he moved among men throughout the kingdom.

10 Aware of every aspect of the condition of that kingdom, and aware of all the crimes of the king's employees with regard to this and that, this man of strict vows took his crow and went to see the king. He announced himself with the claim, "I know everything."

Having come upon a bejeweled minister of the Kosala king, he declared to him, on the basis of what the crow had told him, "You did this upon that occasion. And this man and that man know that you have stolen from the king's treasury." The minister understood very quickly, "The crow informs him of this." He said the same thing to others who always pilfered the king's treasury, and in no instance was anything he was heard to say

* = Yādavas.

15 something that had not been done. Then, scion of Kuru, all those accused employees of the king wantonly killed the sage's crow in the night as the sage slept.

Then, early that morning, when the brahmin saw his crow with an arrow through it while still in its cage, he said to Kṣemadarśin, "King, lord, master of life and wealth, I ask you for safety. If you permit me, I shall declare something to you that is in the best interests of your city. Aggrieved for the sake of a friend, I have come° to you out of whole-hearted loyalty as someone who, unable to put up with the offense, makes the accusation, 'This one steals your wealth.' Highly indignant and intent upon effecting your welfare, I am trying to rouse a friend, the way a chariot driver rouses
20 a good horse. A man who is discerning, who is constantly in quest of lordship, who wants to prosper, should bear with a friend such as this."

The king responded to him, "As I want what is in my own best interests, why would I not suffer hearing what you might say to me, good man? Make your charge, brahmin.

"Speak, if you wish. I will act upon your statement, whatever it is you might tell me, brahmin."

The sage said:

From devotion have I approached you, sir, to report to you what goes on, as I know your policies, your failures, and the dangers posed to you by your servants.

Those who are the teachers of the men who serve kings declared this problem long ago:

> "Living with a king is the way to go for someone who has no other recourse."

25 They say he who associates with kings associates with poisonous snakes. Kings have many friends, and they have many enemies; they say those who serve kings are in danger from them all. So those men should fear every single one of them at every instant.

One cannot give close attention exclusively to the king, but he who wants to prosper cannot be the least bit inattentive toward him either. For the king might blunder because of the inattention, and when the king has blundered, there is no surviving.

He who has learned well approaches a king as he would a blazing fire. A man should always approach his master, the lord of life and wealth, with care, the way he would a poisonous snake that is angry, with the thought
30 "Now I'm dead"; always fearful that he has said something wrong, done something wrong, managed something badly, been sitting badly, or walking badly; always suspicious of the indications the king gives by the movements of his body.

Maya* said,

"A king who is pleased may fulfill every wish, like a God; but like fire,
the king who is angered may burn everything right down to its roots,"

and this is how it works, king.

Now I will make your wealth greater over and over again. A minister like me gives intellectual assistance in a time of crisis.

My crow was intended for death; I do not criticize you because of it, sir, no one who loves you would. You should be aware of those who wish you well and those who do not. Do not think this is something that cannot be known. There are men dwelling right in the palace whose main purpose is to take for themselves, who have no desire to see your subjects prosper. 35 Such men have taken aim at me. They want to rule directly by doing away with you, sir. They can succeed, king, only by joining with those who are nearest to you and not otherwise. Because I fear them, I shall go on to another hermitage.

Really, the arrow that landed in my crow was aimed at me, lord. My crow was sent to the house of Yama, lord of the dead, as a veiled warning to me. I have seen this, king, through an eye made long by asceticism. With my crow as the hook, I have gotten you across this river with its many crocodiles, fish, alligators, and schools of gigantic whales; this remote fastness so hard to reach, so hard to enter, like the Snowy Mountains, with its tree stumps, rocks, and thorns, thronged with tigers, 40 lions, and elephants. A place hard to get to because of darkness is reached with fire, one on the water with boats, but the learned know of no means for crossing the difficult terrain a king must traverse.

Your kingdom is a dense thicket surrounded by darkness that renders one blind. Not even you, sir, can feel confident here, so how could I? This is not a good place to stay. Being righteous and not being righteous are the same here, for one is executed when he does good, and there is no risk for one who does wrong. By rights, execution is for the one who does wrong; how can there be execution for him who does good? It is not right to stay here very long. A wise man would leave here quickly.

There is a river called Sītā° in which boats sink—I regard this trap that slays all to be comparable to it.

45 Sir, you are honey at the edge of a cliff,† or a meal laced with poison.

King, your affections are turned toward the wicked, not the virtuous;
you are like a well surrounded by poison snakes.

* = the sage and architect of the Asuras; see *MBh* 2.1–3.
† See *MBh* 11.1.30 for an earlier instance of this motif.

King, you are like a river with water sweet to drink; but your broad
banks are covered with reed-shafts, so none can get down to the
water.°

You are a King *haṃsa*° in the midst of dogs, vultures, and jackals.

A vine latches onto a great tree and grows to be very extensive, winding round the tree and growing on beyond it; later it serves as tinder when a raging forest fire burns the tree.* Your ministers are like that vine, king, clean them out. You, sir, have made them this way; you, sir, have protected them. With complete contempt for you, they are trying to kill someone who loves you.

50 I have lived here in fear, keeping the secret of your ministers' dereliction—it was as if I were in a house that had a serpent inside; as if I were in a house with the wife of a mighty man. I have just lived here as one of the king's house-mates, making inquiries about his character— "Now has the king brought his senses under control? Has he brought his inner faculties under control? Do his subjects love the king? Does the king love his subjects?" O best of kings, I came here to learn about you.°

You please me king, the way a meal pleases a hungry man; but your ministers do not please me, as water doesn't please a man who isn't thirsty. They regard it as a fault on my part that I serve your interests, sir. There is no other reason, I have no doubt of it. I have not moved to harm them,† and they find something wrong in that. When one's strike against an enemy has gone awry, one must fear him like a snake when one has only broken its back.°

The king said:

55 O best of brahmins, honored with sumptuous accommodations and munificent hospitality, stay longer in my home. Those who do not like you, brahmin, will no longer stay in the palace; for you, sir, must know what is next now. Having examined everything, blessed one, direct me to what is best, so that the wrongdoer gets punished, and so what is done is rightly done.

The sage said:

Without showing them their crimes, make each of them weak one by one. Then after understanding each one's motives, strike one man and then the next. When many are involved in the same crime, they can just trample down any who oppose them. I say this, king, because of the danger that your plans might become known.

60 But we who are brahmins are compassionate, and our punishments are gentle. I seek your welfare, sir, and that of your enemies, and my own as well.

* Text note: See the endnote at 83.48a
† That is, he has not sought vengeance for the killing of his crow.

I declare myself, king: I am your friend, sir. I am a sage, and I am known as Kālakavṛkṣīya. I was a trusted friend of your father, a friend who has honored his agreements with your father now that your kingdom has come into distress upon your father's death. Abandoning all my own wishes, I embraced painful hardship then. I tell you this from affection, so you won't be confused any longer.

Having witnessed both misery and happiness, king, having chanced to gain kingly rule, how can you trifle with your rule, which rests ultimately with your ministers?

Bhīṣma said:

65 Then great joy swelled up once again in the royal court. And when that bull among brahmins became his court priest, the glorious Kosala king brought the earth under one parasol, and the sage Kālakavṛkṣīya offered sacrificial worship for him with the foremost rites. The Kosala king governed the land, acting in accordance with what he heard in this helpful speech.

Bhīṣma said:

84.1 The men in your assembly should be strictly observant men who are always restrained by a sense of shame; imbued with truthfulness and rectitude, they must be able to discuss issues fully.

O Bhārata, son of Kuntī, for all the kinds of distress that may arise, you should try to secure as your ministers men who are extremely wealthy,° men who are extraordinarily heroic warriors, brahmins who are highly learned, and men who are completely contented—all with great determination for carrying out their tasks.

A well-born man regularly honored will not conceal what abilities he has.

Especially cherished is the unique man who can bring you back to your main self,° whether you are cheerful or troubled, tormented or charmed.

5 Your retinue should consist of men from good families who were born in the country; wise, handsome, learned, and bold men who love you well.

The lowborn, the greedy, the cruel, and the brazen will serve you, son, as long as their hands are moist.°

Those dear ones who participate in your success, whom you honor with privileges high and low, and with riches, honor, and hospitable treatment—these are the friends who share your good times. But learned men who live in strict, never-deviating observance of Law, who regularly observe special vows, are never mean-spirited, and they always speak the truth. They will always serve your interests and will never abandon you.

You should be wary of base and stupid men who do not know the common norms. Regard them as having lapsed from the common norms.

10 The king should not favor one man at the expense of the group, if he could take another of them just as well. But should one individual be much better than many, then he may abandon the group for that one as he wishes. This is the description of that excellent man:

> He shows courage, holds his reputation to be most important, abides by his agreements, honors capable men, and does not vie with any who are not really rivals. He would not spurn Lawful Duty out of personal desire, fear, anger, or greed; he is free of arrogance, a speaker of truth, an able man who is in control of himself and has respect for those worthy of respect—he should be a minister in your councils after you have examined him in every respect. He should be from a good family, be truly accomplished, patient, industrious, self-possessed, assertive, knowledgeable, and truthful.

Thus goes the description of the excellent man, O son of Pṛthā.

15 When a man is like this and is also a man of discernment, his enemies become innocuous, and later they even become his allies.

Furthermore, the king who desires prosperity, who has attained wisdom, and is in complete control of himself should scrutinize all the good and bad traits of his ministers. The king who wants to prosper and flourish° should join warriors, priests, hereditary retainers, and even others who are low, to able, well-born men born in the same country who are faithful and cannot be bribed, and who have been thoroughly tested in every way. After he has carefully scrutinized the attributes of men with cultivated minds and natural beauty—men also endowed with brilliance, fortitude, patience,

20 habitual cleanliness, affection, stability, and loyalty—he should commission as agents of his royal affairs the ones who have elevated natures, who are "main workhorses," and who pass the five trials.° For all his affairs, the king should always appoint as his councillors vigorous men of abundant speech, well versed in what to do, of good families, truly accomplished, who know the meanings of gestures, who are not harsh, who are familiar with the orderings of places and times, and who seek what is beneficial to their master's affairs.

A man who lacks energy or enthusiasm is never decisive, and necessarily he produces uncertainties in all projects.

A councillor who is not very learned—even if he is from a noble family, even if he is conversant with Law, Profit, and Pleasure—is not qualified to examine the king's plans.

25 And likewise, one who is not of noble birth—let him be as learned as you like!—gets confused in affairs that require judgment, like a blind man who has no guide.

Nor can an intelligent man who has learned what there is to learn keep a project going very long if he lacks firm resolve—not even if he knows well the techniques involved.

But on the other hand, a man who is stupid and uneducated never reflects on the specific qualities of a task apart from simply carrying it out.

When a councillor is not happily devoted to his master, he is not trusted, so a king should not reveal his plans to a councillor not devoted to him. That perverse man might act with the other ministers to topple the king, the way a fire can topple a tree after gaining access to it through openings made by the wind's battering.

30 The master sometimes may rage with anger and demote a man from his position. In a rage, he may abuse him verbally, and then later be perfectly pleased with him. All these things can be endured by one who is favorably disposed to the king. But ministers can harbor anger, as lightning does thunder. But when a man represses them* in his desire to do what pleases his master, the king should ask for advice on royal affairs from that man, who regards his pleasure and pain to be the same.

A devious man, even one who is wise, devoted, and replete with all these virtues, ought not hear the king's plans.

When someone is in league with the king's enemies and has no regard for the king's citizens, that sort of friend ought not hear the king's plans.

35 The friend who is ignorant, dishonest, stubborn, boastful, in the service of the enemy, irascible, or greedy ought not hear the king's plans.

A stranger who has come along, even one who is happily devoted to the king—let him be as learned as you like!—even one who has been welcomed hospitably, or offered a share for his support, ought not hear the king's plans.

And once someone is accused of even a small charge—even though he possesses other qualities—he ought not hear the king's plans.

An upstanding man of the country who is wise, intelligent, and clever, and who is scrupulously correct in all his actions is one who should hear the king's plans.

A man whose intuitions and analyses are remarkably keen, who understands the basic natures of himself and others, who regards his friends to be the same as himself is one who should hear the king's plans.

40 A man who speaks the truth, whose character is irreproachable, who is serious, modest, and gentle, who is a father and a grandfather, is one who should hear the king's plans.

* = his feelings of approval and grievance.

A man who is contented, highly esteemed, truthful, and bold; an assertive man who despises wrongdoing, understands planning, and understands different times, is one who should hear the king's plans.

The king who wants to wield the rod of power should present his plans to the man who is able to bring everyone alike under his control through gentle persuasion.

That warrior who is wise in policy, whom the people of the city and the country alike have come to trust for his Virtue, should hear the king's plans.

So a king should have and honor well at least three ministers who are endowed with all these qualities, who understand the fundamental elements of a kingdom, and who desire greatness.

45 The ministers should focus on the points of vulnerability in the king's fundamental elements and in those of his enemy. The country that is rooted in the counsel of the king's ministers thrives. One's enemy should not see one's own weak points; but one should go after the enemy at his weak points. As a turtle hides its limbs, one should hide and protect his own points of vulnerability.

The wise ministers of the kingdom are the sense-receptors of policy, the king is the integrator of policy, and the other people in the kingdom are the limbs of policy.

They say the root of royal government is spying, and its sap is policy. But ministers follow after their master in this world to gain their livelihood.

Only after he has become tranquil by purging himself of frivolity, anger, pride, and jealousy should the king consult with his ministers, all of whom shall have passed the five trials.

50 * The king should fix his thoughts on the matter and come to understand the different types of reasoning these three have. At the time of the final consultation, he should announce to them his own conclusions and the final determination.

On the most important matters he should solemnly approach a brahmin teacher who understands Law, Profit, and Pleasure and question him. Should a determination be made with his aid, the king should advance that policy without hesitation.

Those familiar with settled opinion on the fundamental matters of royal policy say a king should always make policy consultations in this way. Therefore, you should always

* Five perfectly regular, classical, upajāti triṣṭubh stanzas.

advance policy in this way, which is also apt for winning over your subjects.

No dwarves, hunchbacks, feeble people, lame people, blind people, mental defectives, women, nor eunuchs should be there.°* Nor should anyone be doing any business through that area, in front of it, behind it, above it, or below it.

He should climb up to an empty roof-top terrace where there is clear visibility—no tall grasses or canes nearby—and there, avoiding all mistakes of voice and gesture, he should consult on matters in good time.

Bhīṣma said:

85.1 Yudhiṣṭhira, on this they recite this ancient account of the dialogue between Bṛhaspati† and Śakra.‡

Śakra said:

O brahmin, what one step might a man take perfectly and so gain great glory and become the standard for all beings?

Bṛhaspati said:

Kind speech§ is the one step a man might take perfectly and so gain great glory and become a standard for all people. Śakra, by taking this one step and bringing happiness to everyone, a man will always become a beloved favorite to all people.

5 The man who never says anything, who is always frowning, who has an animus against all beings is not practicing kindness of speech in this world. But people like the man who glances at others first, who speaks to others first, and smiles as he speaks. The giving of a gift that is not accompanied by kind talk does not please people; it is like food without spices. But, Śakra, even he who gives people nothing, while talking to them with sweet words, can bring everyone under his power with his kind talk. So, one who wishes to wield the rod of power should practice kind speech. That will produce results, and people will not fear him.

10 Nowhere is there the equal of well-spoken, kind speech, smooth and sweet, being aptly dispensed.

Bhīṣma said:

After his court priest told him this, Śakra acted completely in accord with it. And you, too, son of Kuntī, should practice this perfectly.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

86.1 O Indra among kings, how does a king guarding his subjects gain everlasting fame, especially for his administration of Justice?

* = where consultation takes place.
† = the court priest and advisor of the Gods.
‡ = Indra, the king of the Gods. § = *sāntva.*

Bhīṣma said:

An upright king who is dedicated to guarding his subjects with scrupulously honest judicial procedures acquires Merit and fame and both worlds.*

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

But with what kind of procedures, and with what men, does the king administer justice? O man of great wisdom, I pose this question, and you should properly tell me this. I do not think the attributes you have previously spoken of in connection with men are ever found in a single man.

Bhīṣma said:

5 O man of great wisdom, it is just as you, who are so insightful, say: It is very difficult to find a man possessed of that lot of attributes. However, to be brief about it, good character is not impossible to find if one makes the effort.

You will appoint as your councillors such men as I will now describe to you: Four learned brahmins who are bold, virtuous, and upright; three humble śūdras° who have been honest in their previous work. The king should make a fifty-year-old *sūta* his reciter of ancient learning; he should be a man who possesses the eight virtues,° is forceful but not resentful, is steeped in theories and traditions, humble and impartial, able to participate when others are arguing about a decision to be rendered,° and subject to no temptations though in the midst of riches.

10 The king should carefully consider judicial decisions in the presence of these eight ministers, who must all be free of the seven hideous vices.° He should promulgate decisions in the country and display them to the country. With this judicial procedure, the subjects must always be seen in person. You should never hold a proceeding in secret, for that threatens the validity of the proceeding. Obviously, if a proceeding miscarries, the Injustice of it will oppress you and them. Your country will scatter like a flock of birds fleeing a hawk; it will always be adrift, like a broken-down boat upon the ocean.

When a king in this world guards his subjects poorly, Unjustly, he feels

15 fear in his heart, and heaven is barred to him; and too the royal minister who rules Unjustly, or his son. The man who has been appointed to the seat of Justice is the very foundation of the Good Law, O bull among men, and any retainers of the king responsible for judicial processes who do not do their work rightly, putting themselves first, all go down,† and the king with them.

When people who have no protector° have been dealt with high-

* = this world and the next.
† That is, they go downward for their next rebirth.

handedly by the mighty and are mostly just babbling wretchedly,* the king should normally become their patron.

Now the force of an eyewitness is good, as what is said in oral reports might be ambiguous. A matter without eyewitnesses, or where one party has no patron, is to be examined specially.

He should cause punishments that suit the crime to befall the wicked. He should make the rich fearful by means of fines, and the poor through 20 execution and imprisonment. The king should govern the ill-behaved through training, even with blows; the educated† with gentle words and presents. For him who tries to kill the king, there should be the "spectacular execution,"‡ and also for a person who lives by thieving and one who causes mixing of the social Orders.

O lord of peoples, when a king applies the rod of punishment rightly, or when he has done so with due seriousness, he acquires no Evil, only everlasting Merit. But he who punishes without careful discernment, acting only on his own whims, becomes infamous in this world and goes to the hell Naraka when he dies. He should not visit punishment on someone from the mere hearsay of others. He should imprison someone or free him by following the practices taught in tradition.

25 The king must never, ever, kill a messenger, no matter what the emergency. One who slays a messenger goes down to hell with all his companions. Should a king caught up in the Law of kṣatriyas slay a messenger who is only saying what has been dictated to him, that king's ancestors acquire the karma of killing a brahmin.

A messenger should have seven qualities: He should be from a good family, of impeccable character, eloquent, clever, a speaker of pleasantries, one who repeats what has been dictated to him, and he should have a good memory.

His doorkeepers and sentinels are to be possessed of these very same qualities, and also his bodyguards.

Estimable is the minister who knows the fundamental principles of the Teachings of Law and Profit, is able to make peace and wage war both, is intelligent, persevering, wise, and a keeper of secrets.

30 A man of good family, truly accomplished and able, the commander in chief of the army should have these same qualities. And he should know the fundamental principles of battle formations, war machines, and soldiers, be boldly aggressive, able to tolerate rain, cold, heat, and wind, and know the weaknesses of the enemy. He should make enemies feel confident, but he should have confidence in no one. Confidence even in one's sons is inadvisable, lord of kings.

* That is, during a legal proceeding.
† = mainly learned brahmins.
‡ = *citra vadha*, "execution with torture."

O blameless one, I have explained to you the basic truth and meaning of the Learned Teachings. I have also declared the highest secret, kings' never trusting anyone.

(84j) The Fortified City, Economics, Taxation, and Treasury

12.87–90 (B. 86–89; C. 3228–3361)
87 (86; 3228). Yudhiṣṭhira asks about the city a king should dwell in. Bhīṣma says security and prosperity are the principal concerns (1–5). He then lists the numerous qualities of a fortified town suitable for a king's residence (5–10) and gives directions on how the king should plan for future emergencies, keep up morale (by ensuring the administration of justice), encourage the immigration of desirable experts, and keep close track at home and abroad with spies (10–20).

Bhīṣma then moves to the topic of the king's religious provisions: Notable is the assurance of immunity from bad karma for doing his duty and an emphasis upon affiliating himself with recognized ascetics wielding power and authority (20–30).
88 (87; 3261). Yudhiṣṭhira wants to know everything about defending a country and tending it. Bhīṣma recommends a hierarchy be established with a headman of every village, and others for every ten, twenty, hundred, and thousand villages. These overseers are to be supported with surpluses from their villages (1–5). The king should have an agent in every village who checks that all merchants and craftsmen pay their proper taxes. The king should keep taxes at a reasonable level and not make himself odious, though there are times of emergency when the king must make the whole kingdom his treasury (5–20). The king alternates harshness and sympathy to make populations amenable to his will, and he may sometimes use fear and cajolery to coax extra revenues from his people (20–30). Nomadic cattle-tenders should be taxed, but they must be treated with special moderation and conciliation, as they might just disappear if treated like normal subjects (30–35).
89 (88; 3302). Yudhiṣṭhira asks what a king in a sound position should do to augment his treasury. Bhīṣma begins by

invoking Law and directing him to be concerned first with the welfare of his subjects. He then tells him to milk taxes from the country, but he should do so according to Law, gently, and with due consideration of his subjects. He must break down the integrity of corporate groups so he can easily manipulate the people in them (1–10). Next Bhīṣma gives prescriptions and proscriptions concerning various economic pursuits and the people associated with them: Taverns, brothels, and so forth should be curbed. All begging should be proscribed except in times of distress. Barbarian tribespeople should be kept out. Farming, herding, and commerce should be encouraged and protected. Wealthy people are critically important and should be honored and feted (10–25).

90 (89; 3335). Bhīṣma continues, changing the subject to the economic well-being of brahmins, who have the first claim on the produce of the land. The king should be alarmed when a brahmin claims he cannot survive in the realm and threatens to leave it. He must provide that one a living and even give him luxuries to persuade him to stay (1–5). Agriculture, herding, and commerce keep everyone alive; the Vedas promote everyone's welfare as well. The kṣatra *was created to slay the barbarians who interfere with the operation of the Vedas (5). The king must provide protection for all, and guard himself as well. To these ends, and to monitor the implementation of his government, he makes use of spies (5–15). He cannot expect to please everyone, but he must work for the benefit of all, even those who are disaffected (15). His superiority derives simply from his chance power, and he must himself always be wary of the more powerful (15–20). Bhīṣma concludes with exhortations on the general importance of agriculture and trade (25–25).*

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

87.1 What kind of city should the king himself live in? One that already exists or one he has made for himself? Tell me this, grandfather.

Bhīṣma said:

Bhārata, the correct thing for the king to do is to check carefully the place where he is to live with his sons, brothers, and friends; he should check it for security and for its ability to sustain life. So I will tell you about fortifications in particular, and after you hear what I say, you should draw up plans accordingly and follow through with diligence.

Keeping the six kinds of "fortress"° in view, the king should establish cities so that prosperity for all is the main effect, or at least great abundance.

5 The six kinds of "fortress" are the fort in a desert, the fort in the open land, the fort in thc mountains, the fort among men, the fort in water, and the fort in the forest.

The king, with his loyal ministers and troops should dwell in a city which is perfectly fortified and outfitted with food-grains and weapons; that has sturdy walls and a moat; that has plenty of elephants, horses, and chariots; where there are learned artisans; where the provisions are very well stored; where the people are righteous and supremely industrious; where there are mighty men, elephants, and horses; which shines with squares and bazaars; where the judicial proceedings are clearly established; which is tranquil and has no fear of anything; which has a splendid appearance, which hums with life, and has excellent buildings; which has a full complement of heroes and rich men, and resounds with the murmur

10 of the *brahman;** which has a full complement of fairs and festivals; where the Gods always are honored.

In that place the king should enlarge his treasury, his army, the number of his allies, and his administration of justice. He should eliminate all the defects in the city and in the country. He should diligently augment the stores of goods and the stores of weapons. He should increase all his provisions, and those of machines, bludgeons, medicines, fire-wood, iron, grain-chaff,° charcoal, lumber, horn, bone, bamboo, marrow, oil, lard, honey, collections of herbs, hemp, *sarja* resin, and grains, weapons, arrows, leather, sinew, rods of *vetra* cane, strands of *muñja* and *balbaja* grasses, and bow-sticks.

15 The king should always restrict access to the good reservoirs and wells that hold a lot of water; likewise to trees and plants full of juice.

Religious teachers, priests, and court priests should be welcomed with attentive hospitality, as should great bowmen, builders, and astrologers. Men who are wise, intelligent, self-disciplined, industrious, courageous, learned, of good families, and perfectly noble spirits should be appointed to all tasks. The king should honor those who are righteous and punish those who are wicked. He should carefully keep all the social Orders connected to their proper tasks. Using spies to keep close track of conditions within and outside the kingdom, he should set the people of the city and the countryside to work.

20 The king himself should supervise spies, planning, and the treasury; planning especially, for everything rests on that. He should know everything his enemies and allies and even the neutrals intend to do through the eyes of spies in the cities and in the countryside.

So should he order everything, neglecting nothing, honoring those loyal to him and punishing his antagonists.

* = the Veda.

He should regularly worship the Gods with the sacrificial rites, and make gifts freely. Protecting his subjects is his obligatory duty, and work that one is obliged to do can never be faulted.

He should arrange for the regular well-being and the subsistence of the poor, those who have no protectors, the elderly, widows, and young maidens.

25 Respectfully, with no condescension, he should regularly, at appropriate times, offer clothing, housewares, and food to hermitages.

He should diligently inform a man of asceticism about himself, all his projects, and his government, always standing humbly inclined before him.

Whenever he sees a man of great learning from a good family who has given up all riches, the king should honor such a man with couches, seats, and good food. The king should trust that man in any crisis—even barbarians trust men of asceticism! The king should place his stores at this one's disposal and receive this one's wisdom in return.

But he should not serve them constantly, nor honor them too much.

30 One of these* is to be made in his own lands, another in the lands of his enemies, another in the forest lands, and another in the cities of his feudatories. He should give them hospitable treatment, various amenities, and support—those in the lands of his enemies and in the forests as well as those in his own realm. These ascetics of strict vows may willingly give refuge to the king in some circumstance when he is in need of refuge.

This indication of the kind of city the king himself should live in has been recited to you in condensed form.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

88.1 O bull of the Bharatas, king, tell me about the defense of a country and winning a country over. I want to understand them perfectly.

Bhīṣma said:

All right! I will declare to you all the basic elements of defending a country perfectly and winning a country over. Focus your mind and listen to this.

A headman is to be appointed for a village, and another for every ten villages; and he should appoint one for twenty,° for a hundred, and for a thousand. The headman of the village reports to the overseer of ten any problems he has in his village, while that one reports to the overseer of

5 twenty. The overseer of twenty reports all the doings of the people of the region to the overseer of a hundred villages. The village headman may use whatever surplus there is from the village. The overseer of ten villages, and the overseer of twenty as well, are to be supported from that. The well-respected overseer of a hundred deserves to enjoy the produce of a great village that teems with very well-fed people, O most splendid of the

* That is, ascetic allies.

Bharatas. Indeed, Bhārata, the king has a number of such villages at his disposal in his kingdom! The overseer of a thousand villages has the right to the best branch-city. The king of the country° wants his yield in payments of grain and gold.

Whatever project is to be accomplished in a village° should be done for you by the villagers themselves. One of your deputies who knows Law and is always alert should watch over it.

10 In every town there should be someone who understands every kind of business. He should be in a high position and have a dreadful look, like a planet up among the stars. He himself should always circulate, visiting everyone.

He should make the merchants pay taxes after he checks over their purchases and sales, the street on which they are situated, their food, their other expenses, and their prosperity. He should make craftsmen pay taxes for the returns on their craft after repeatedly checking over their production, what they give out, and the craft. Taxes high and low were the norm with past kings, Yudhiṣṭhira. The king should do anything whatsoever to prevent their loss. He should fix every tax after checking over the work and its fruit; he must never cause the work or its fruit to

15 cease to be a motive for people. The king should always levy taxes circumspectly, so the king and worker both have a stake in the work. The king should not destroy his own foundation and that of others out of greed. He should stop up the ways the yearning to have more comes over him and show benevolence.

The people hate a king reputed to consume too much. How can one who is detested get anything good? Only he who is benevolent finds favor.

A king of sound mind should milk the country according to the calf analogy: Nurtured, the calf gains strength and is able to withstand hardship, Bhārata. But the calf that has sucked too much cannot work, Yudhiṣṭhira, and the country which has been overmilked cannot do much work.

20 The king who takes hold of his kingdom himself and treats it well lives upon what it produces and gains tremendous benefits. Really, kings in this world accumulate stores for times of distress, when the country becomes their treasury and their treasury becomes their quarters.

As he is able, let him show compassion to all who live in the city and in the countryside who take refuge with him or who depend upon him, even all those who are closely related. Having smashed an outlying people, the people in between may be exploited easily. Gladdened and afflicted in this way, people do not get all fired up in anger.

25 Having repeatedly announced the collecting of taxes ahead of time, he should appear throughout his realm and instill fear in the country. "This emergency has sprung up. There is great danger from the circle of enemies,

and that danger is not likely to dissipate on its own, as if it were bamboo after its fruit had come.* My enemies have risen up with many barbarians, and they are trying to attack the country to kill me. In this horrible calamity, in this severe danger that has arisen, I need your riches in order to save you. I shall return it all to you when the danger subsides. The enemies will not give back anything they take from here by force." And if someone's accumulation of wealth is designated for the use of his wife and children, he may add, "That one will destroy what is yours, starting with your wife."

30 He may say, "I am as pleased by your doing so well as I am at the birth of sons. I favor you as much as I can without harming the country. Like strong bulls, you must carry the kingdom during emergencies. You have no more pleasing duty than giving wealth during an emergency."

With words so sweet, smooth, and flattering, the king who understands how time works can throw his reins away and take hold of the draft animals directly.

He should make cattle-tenders pay taxes after checking over their pasturage, the maintenance of their help, their losses, the dangers there are to herds of cattle, and their prosperity. Cattle-tenders will disappear† and reside in the wilderness if no exception is made for them.° Therefore,

35 toward them in particular the king should behave mildly. Conciliation, protection, generosity, stability, support, and favors must constantly be offered to cattle-tenders. Any profits from cattle-tenders should constantly be employed among them in every way; thus will he strengthen the country, and commerce and agriculture as well. So the perceptive king will take pains to cultivate the favor of cattle-tenders, being compassionate toward them and never negligent, and levying mild taxes upon them. Wealth that brings well-being everywhere is easy to attain with cattle-tenders. There is no wealth more appropriate than that, Yudhiṣṭhira.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

89.1 When a king whose position is sound° needs more for his treasury, how should he proceed? Tell me this, wise grandfather.

Bhīṣma said:

The king who desires Merit should be devoted to the welfare of his subjects and govern them according to place, according to time, and according to capability. Since the king wants what is best for his subjects and for himself, he should make everything in the country function in accordance with the Good Law.

He should suck the milk from the country, lest he leave that honey to the "bees" that wander in and out. Let him milk the cow with the calf in

5 mind and not bruise her teats. Let him suck the country gently, like a

* Bamboo dries up and withers away when its fruit comes in.
† That is, leave the king's territory.

leech. He should take what he takes as a tigress picks up her cub, firmly, so it does not fall, but without biting it.

He can make the country pay smaller and smaller taxes as it grows. Or, if he wants, he can realize the increase, taking more and more. As when training draught animals, one should increase their burden frequently. And one should bring the halters and the traces down over them gently and carefully. Those that are hard to tame will perish if halters and traces are thrown upon them all of a sudden; if done agreeably and carefully, they will become usable.

Therefore, a group of men is very difficult to win over when the representations to them are the same for all, since only after propitiating

10 the principals may the others in the group be put to use. Thus, after dividing those who are inclined to support each other,° he might propitiate them and use them as he likes without any effort. He should not extract taxes from them in the wrong place, or at the wrong time; he should do so rather by propitiating them in the proper order of their ranks, and in due accordance with time and the prescribed rules. I declare these only as devices; the illusion is not what I intend. One trying to train horses without any device will only enrage them.

Taverns and brothels, and pimps, actors, and gamblers, and all others like these who injure the country must be curbed.° For when these are present in a country, they trouble the decent subjects.

15 "No one may beg° for anything from anyone when it is not a time of emergency": this was a rule Manu made for people some time in the past. For none would survive if none did work in this world—all three of the three worlds would certainly perish.

The master, the king, who does not keep these men within the rules suffers a quarter portion of their evil actions, so says Holy Learning. Likewise he enjoys a quarter part of the Meritorious, Lawful Deeds that they do.

After one visits these places* there arises an addiction that destroys one's well-being.† Can the man who is addicted to his desires avoid what he should not do?

But in a time of distress those who have no property may beg, and one who wants to show pity should, out of compassion, give them alms in

20 accordance with Law. Let there be no beggars in your realm, nor any barbarian tribespeople; these just take what is good, and they promote the well-being of no one. Those who encourage people, those who make your subjects grow greater—they are the ones who must live in your realm, not those who hinder people's welfare.

* The "places" referred to are the taverns and brothels mentioned above in 14.
† Text note: See the endnote at 89.18b.

Those whose purpose is to take others' money should be punished, great king; he should make them pay as much in fines and taxes as they made those others* lay out.°

Agriculture, cattle herding, commerce, and any other work that is like that, he should have done by many men and workers. If a man who pursues agriculture, cattle herding, or commerce meets with any insecurity at all, then the king gets the blame for it. He should regularly honor the wealthy with vehicles, clothing, and banquets, and he should say to them, "Be pleased to receive these tokens of honor as well as me." The wealthy are one of the important elements of kings' kingdoms, Bhārata. A wealthy man is the foremost of all people, no doubt of it.

The wise man protects him,† and so does the heroic warrior, the rich man, and the landlord who is Lawful; so too the ascetic who is truthful and insightful. Therefore, king, be friendly toward all these, and maintain your truthfulness, your rectitude, your temper, and your kindness. So shall you obtain your army, your treasury, your allies, and your land. Committed to truthfulness and rectitude above all, king, you shall be blessed with allies and treasury.

Bhīṣma said:

In your realm none should chop down trees that bear edible fruit. The experts say the fruits and roots Lawfully belong to the brahmins. Other people may consume what the brahmins leave. No one not a brahmin may take anything while hindering brahmins from taking it.

If a brahmin sets out to leave,°‡ having declared that he is emaciated because he has nothing to live on, then a living must be arranged for him and his wife, king. If he will not relent, then he should be reproached in the assembly of brahmins with, "Now where is this person going to set a limit?"° He will certainly desist. If not, O son of Kuntī, he will say to him next, "What has happened in the past is to be put out of mind; this is a command! I do not believe it, but people say this, brahmin, 'He would be able to be induced with luxuries.'" If he will not be induced merely with a living, the king should do that.§

Agriculture, cattle-herding, and commerce are what the people of this world live on. And beyond these, the Triple Learning also promotes the welfare of beings. As this‖ operates, there are the barbarians who hinder it; now Brahmā created the *kṣatra* in this world to slay them. Slay enemies, guard your subjects, worship with sacrificial rites, king. O gladdener of the Kauravas, be heroic and fight in battles. The king who would guard those in need of protection is the most noble of all kings; those kings who do not guard them are never the source of any good.

* = their victims. † = the king. ‡ That is, to leave the king's realm.
§ = offer luxuries. ‖ = the Triple Learning.

Yudhiṣṭhira, the king must keep informed about all people; in fact it is for this reason that one man makes use of other men.* Guarding those outside the kingdom from those within, and those within from those without, those without from others without, and your own people from your own people, protect them all, all the time.

And as he guards the earth, the king should protect himself from all the others. All learned men say, "Everything here is based upon oneself." The king should always worry, "What weak point do I have? What addiction? What disaster has not yet befallen me? From where do my problems come upon me?"

With the idea, "They will tell me if my business is well conducted, or if not; whether my reputation is glorious in the provinces; whether it is glorious throughout the realm," he should range over the land with secret spies he has commissioned.

Yudhiṣṭhira, you should ensure that everything is superbly carried out for those who know Law, and those who are resolute, never retreating from battles; and for all those who depend for their life upon the country, and for those who depend for their life upon the king; and for all your ministers; and for all neutrals; and for those who may praise you, and for those who may excoriate you, as well. But, son, you cannot please absolutely everyone; there are allies, enemies, and neutrals among all people.

"When men are equal in the power of their arms, are equal in their cultivation of good qualities, how is it someone is greater and may make use of other men?"

They do so just as the mobile may eat the immobile, as those with teeth may devour those without, and as angry vipers that are poisonous may devour other snakes. One should always be alert and never fail to take care with them, Yudhiṣṭhira. Like *bhāruṇḍa* birds† they fall upon those who are not paying attention.

I hope the merchants in your country are not timid because they are oppressed by taxes; that those who make exertions in the wilderness areas are buying a lot for a little. I hope your farmers are not so oppressed as to abandon your realm. They who bear the load for kings are supporting all the others as well.

The Gods and the groups of the ancestors live upon what is given them from here; so do men, serpents, Rākṣasas, birds, and beasts.

This is how your country gets its living, and this is its protection, Bhārata. I will tell you more, Pāṇḍava, on this very subject.

* Presumably a reference to spying.
† = some kind of fantastic predatory bird; see 12.163.9.

(84k) The Song of Utathya

12.91–92 (B. 90–91; C. 3362–3462)
91 (90; 3362). Bhīṣma announces he will teach the Laws of the kṣatra *that the brahmin Utathya Aṅgiras taught to king Māndhātar. Utathya teaches that the king exists for Law, not for doing what he wants. He must protect beings by means of the Laws and be the husband of the earth. He is evil if he pursues the Highest Law, for if the king does not assert Law and obstruct evil, the world becomes chaotic and dangerous (1–10). Utathya gives various brief characterizations and etymologies of "kingship" and "Law," which emphasize the need for royal vigor (10–15). The king must eschew pride (the offspring of Royal Splendor and Lawlessness), and he must always gratify the wishes of brahmins (the womb of the "Law") and never be resentful toward them. The Goddess Royal Splendor will leave him in fury if he does, just as she earlier left Bali for Indra (15–25). Utathya exhorts Māndhātar to be wary of people who could injure him, and he inveighs against the king's having contact with the wrong people (25). The king must avoid sexual contact with the wrong people, in part to encourage his subjects to do the same and thus avoid the monstrosities that ensue from unions that cross proper bounds (30). When the wielder of force in society (the kṣatriya) neglects Law, the regular phenomena of the world become confused, society collapses into a uniform heap* (saṃkara), *ownership yields to thievery, and the king and the polity disappear (30–35).*
92 (91; 3403). Utathya's lecture to Māndhātar continues. All beings are well when the rains come in time and the king follows Law. The king's work is like the washerman's: both should remove blemishes (1–5). The king determines the world's Age by the level of his attention to the Good Law. When he pays heed to Law, all beings do well; when he is negligent, all do badly (5–10). Utathya dwells upon the king's special responsibility for the weak. Might was made for the protection of the weak, he says. The eyes of the weak are dangerous for those that cross them. The king must not vex the weak; any evil done them will redound against him or his descendants. When the weak suffer, when there is much poverty, when the king's retainers extort the people, it is the fault of the king (10–20). The king is generally responsible

for the welfare of his subjects and their virtue. He must examine his government carefully all the time; his own fate in the next world depends upon the goodness of his kingdom (25). Utathya gives a listing of "The Laws of the King": various aspects of royal governance. Prominent among them are the king's favors toward his own people and the virtuous, and his resisting and restraining his enemies and wrongdoers (30–35). Utathya concludes with miscellaneous observations on the role of the king (the king is really Yama; the king is really Indra) and exhortations to be vigorous and forceful, to honor religious virtuosos, and so on, and to be cagey toward his enemies (40–50).

Bhīṣma said:

91.1 I will declare to you in their entirety, Yudhiṣṭhira, all those Laws of the *kṣatra* that that most excellent knower of the *brahman* Utathya Aṅgiras* taught with great pleasure to Māndhātar, son of King Yuvanāśva. And I will teach you just as Utathya, that most excellent knower of the *brahman*, taught him.

Utathya said:

Know this, Māndhātar, the king exists for Law, not for doing what gives him pleasure. The king is the protector of the world. The king does his Lawful Duty and then becomes a God. If he does not do his Lawful Duty, he

5 goes to the Naraka hell. People depend upon Law, and Law depends upon the king. The king who administers it rightly is the lord and husband of the earth. A king blessed with the Goddess of Splendid Wealth† who is also dedicated to Highest Law‡ is said to be evil. The Gods then come to be despised, and some people say, "There is no Law." Those who live Lawlessly are very successful, and people flock to anything and everything, thinking, "This will be good."

When evil is not checked, the performance of Lawful Deeds is disrupted and great Lawlessness occurs. They say day and night alike are dangerous.

When evil is not checked, the twice-born do not perform vows and follow the Vedas, brahmins do not stretch forth the rites of sacrificial worship.

* Utathya, the first son of Aṅgiras, was the older brother of Bṛhaspati, the house-priest and advisor of the Gods.

† = Lakṣmī.

‡ Basically, dedicated to the habits and attitudes associated with the pursuit of ultimate beatitude and Absolute Freedom *(mokṣa)*, such as asceticism, harmlessness, living in the wilderness.

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When evil is not checked, great king, the minds of all men are agitated, like men condemned to execution.

Having scrutinized both worlds, the seers themselves created the king as a very great being, saying, "This one will be Law."

He in whom the Good Law "shines"* is the one they call the "king."† He in whom the Good Law "disappears,"‡ the Gods know to be a "puny man."§

Indeed, the Blessed Law is a "bull,"‖ and he who puts a stop to it# is a "puny man,"** in the mind of the Gods; so one should not make the Good Law disappear.

When Law is increasing, everyone grows greater in every way, and when it shrinks, they diminish; so the king should make Law increase.

"Law," *"dharma,"* "flows from wealth,"†† or from "holding firmly,"‡‡ that is a settled conclusion. Tradition teaches that it is what demarcates the things that ought not be done, king.

The Self-Existent One created the Good Law so beings would flourish; therefore, the king should make Law increase to benefit his subjects. Therefore, O tiger among kings, tradition teaches that Law is what is most splendid.

He is the king, that bull of a man who rules his subjects well. He should cherish only Law, paying no heed to his own likes or resentments. Law is the very best producer of what is best for kings, O most excellent of the Bharatas.

The brahmins are the womb of Law, so the king should honor them always. Māndhātar, a king should fulfill the wishes of brahmins without any resentment. Danger arises when a king does not fulfill their wishes; his allies do not thrive, and they even become his enemies. At the time when the Asura king Bali Vairocana expressed resentment° against the brahmins, the Goddess Royal Splendor§§ left him,° as she burned with fury against him. After leaving Bali, she went over to Indra, he who had punished Pāka‖‖ with death. Bali was deeply pained when he saw the Goddess Royal Splendor with Indra, smasher of cities. Lord, this was the fruit of his resentment and his pride.

Therefore, Māndhātar, be wary, lest Royal Splendor be furious with you and leave you. "Pride is born the son of Royal Splendor from Lawlessness," says Holy Learning. It led the Gods and the Asuras under its control many, many times, and many royal seers as well. So be wary, king. Having conquered it, one becomes king; when conquered by it, one becomes a

* = *virājeta.* Here begins a short series of etymological points based upon the general phonetic similarity of the roots of the target word and the explanatory word or phrase.
† = *rājānam.* ‡ = *vilīyate.* § = *vṛṣala;* also a vile person, a śūdra.
‖ = *vṛṣa.* # = *yas tasya kurute hy alam.* ** = *vṛṣala; vṛṣa + alam.*
†† = *dhanāt.* ‡‡ = *dhāraṇāt.* §§ = Śrī.
‖‖ Pāka was a Daitya Asura, as was Bali; see the LCP s.v. "Daitya."

slave. If you want to stand for a long time, Māndhātar, live without being a slave to Lawlessness and its companion, pride.

The king should refrain from° repeated contact with these: drunks, heedless men, young boys, and especially the insane. And he should avoid indulging in things that are harmful. He should constantly be wary of a minister who has been punished, and particularly of women; and of mountains, rough terrain, forts, elephants, horses, and creeping snakes. He should avoid going about at night. He should avoid excess, arrogance, dissembling, and anger.

The king should not be sexually intimate with women unknown to him, with eunuchs,° with promiscuous women, with other men's wives, nor with girls. Evil monsters are produced in families as a result of mixing the social Orders—eunuchs, children lacking limbs, children with thick tongues, mental defectives. These and others are born when the king does not pay heed. Therefore, the king in particular must act this way for the well-being of his subjects.

Great problems arise when a kṣatriya is negligent. Lawless Deeds are done that bring about the mixing of his subjects. It is cold during summer, it is not cold during winter; it does not rain, or it rains too much; diseases plague his subjects. Comets hover, and gruesome planets and many other king-destroying omens are seen. When the king does not protect his subjects, he himself is not protected; his subjects fade away, and he disappears after them. Two steal from one, many others from the two; girls are ruined—they say these things are the fault of the king. Not one among men can say, "This is mine," when the king abandons Law and pursues his negligent ways.

Utathya said:

Parjanya rains down at the right times and the king behaves Lawfully! When such perfection as this comes to be, it supports his subjects comfortably.

Just as a washerman° who does not know how to get the dirt out of clothing, or to clean clothes that have been dyed, is not really a washerman, so it is with him.* In exactly the same way there are śūdras occupying the various jobs of the four Orders—in the jobs of brahmins, kṣatriyas, and vaiśyas. Labor is for śūdras, farming is for vaiśyas, the administration of the rod of force is for the king, and celibacy, asceticism, the reciting of ritual formulas, and what is ultimately Real is for brahmins. Among these, the kṣatriya who knows how to get rid of problems of behavior is the father, he is the progenitor, he is like a washerman who does know how to clean clothes.

O bull of the Bharatas, the Kṛta, Tretā, Dvāpara, and Kali Ages are all different ways of the king's behaving; the king is said to be the Age.

* = the negligent king described at the end of the last chapter.

Everything—the System of the Four Orders of Society, the Vedas, the System of the Four Religious Patterns of Life—becomes confused when the king does not pay heed. The king is the maker of creatures; the king is their destroyer: When he is dedicated to Law, he is their maker; when he is not dedicated to Law, he is their destroyer. The king's wife, his children, his relatives, and friends, all of these together suffer when the king does not
10 pay heed. Elephants, horses, cattle, camels, mules, asses all do badly when the king's behavior is Unlawful.

Māndhātar, it is said that strength was created by the Creator for the sake of the weak. That great reality upon which everything is based* is weak. The existence he† possesses and those beings that depend upon him all decline when the king does not abide by Law, king.

> I think there is no one who can withstand the glowering eye of a weak man, of a sage, or of a venomous viper—never assault a weak man.
>
> Son, never, ever, think of the weak as contemptible;° may the glowering
> 15 eyes of the weak never burn you and all your connections. Nothing whatsoever sprouts and grows in the family of one who has been burned by a weak man; it burns all the way down to the roots—never assault a weak man.

Weakness is better than strength, since strength is too strong. There is nothing left of the strong man who has been burned by a weak man. When someone despised is assaulted and cries out, if he does not find a savior, then a punishment not fashioned by man strikes the king. Do not stand upon your strength, son;° do not vex the weak, lest the eyes of the weak burn you up as a fire burns whatever it rests on. The tears that fall from those that wail because they have been wrongly charged slay the children and the animals of those who make the false accusations.°

> 20 If not on oneself, then on one's children; if not on one's children, then on one's grandchildren—truly, an evil deed one does does not bear its fruit immediately; it is like a cow.‡

When a weak man is being slain and finds no savior, then a great and severe punishment fashioned by the Gods falls upon the king. When upstanding citizens of his country, such as brahmins, regularly° go begging, such men slay the king because their begging is his fault. When many of the kings retainer's in the province conduct themselves improperly, that is a great sin on the part of the king. When upstanding people, whether from capricious desire or with the compulsion of a business interest, take their

* Probably dharma. † = the king.
‡ An ambiguous metaphor; see endnote at 92.20.

money from those who are pleading wretchedly, it is a great outrage on the king's part.

> 25 * A great tree sprouts and grows, and creatures make their homes on it; when it is cut down, or burned, those that depend upon it become homeless.
>
> The king can quickly lose his own good or bad deeds, when the people in his country perform the principal Law° or the sacramental rites, while they praise the virtues of the king; or, on the other hand, when they do some Lawless Deed because they are confused about Law.
>
> In a place where men who are known to be evil live and act, the discord there among the strictly observant finds the king.° But when the king punishes men who are not to be punished, his kingdom does not prosper.
>
> When a king has honored a minister according to his deserts and charges him with giving advice and waging war, then that king's country prospers, and he enjoys the entire earth for a long time.

And when he carefully examines him† and honors his well-done work and his well-spoken words, the king gains the very highest Merit.

> 30 When the king enjoys what is his‡ after sharing the benefits, demeans no others, and cuts down him who is mighty and proud, that is said to be the Law of the king.
>
> When he protects everything by his words, his body, and his deeds; when he does not overlook the wrongdoing of even his son, that is said to be the Law of the king.
>
> When the king protects refugees as if they were his own children; when he does not break any covenants, that is said to be the Law of the king.
>
> When, filled with Munificent Trusting Surrender, he worships the Gods with rites of sacrifice, bestowing opulent presents on the priests, paying no heed to his own desires and aversions, that is said to be the Law of the king.
>
> When he wipes away the tears of the miserable, the helpless, and the old; when he excites the people to joy, that is said to be the Law of the king.

* Four Vedic style triṣṭubh stanzas.
† = his minister.
‡ = the country of his kingdom and everyone and everything in it.

35 When he makes his allies prosper and drags his enemies down; when he fully honors the piously good, that is said to be the Law of the king.

He guards the truth upon every occasion,° he regularly makes gifts of land, he honors guests and his servants; that is said to be the Law of the king.

The king in whom both restriction and encouragement are well established gains the benefit of them in both this world and the next. The king is Yama,* Māndhātar, the supreme Lord of Lawful people. Restraining life, he lives well; but not restraining it, he is evil.

When he patronizes sacrificial priests, house-priests, and learned teachers, treating them hospitably, without any slights, that is said to be the Law of the king.

40 Yama has a hold on every single being without exception; the king should imitate him: he should hold his subjects in accordance with the rules.

Really, every king is compared to thousand-eyed Indra, O bull among men, for the Law the king sees is the Law.

You should diligently cultivate patience, insight, perseverance, intelligence, and research into the essential being of creatures, and what is right and wrong in every case.

The winning over of all the people, making gifts, and sweet speech should be cultivated too. He should protect the people of the town and the country as if they were his own offspring.

Certainly a king who is not industrious cannot protect his subjects; governing as king is very hard to do, son; it is a tremendous burden.

45 So the wise and heroic king who knows how to use the rod of force is able to protect his subjects; it cannot be done by a king who does not have the rod, who is a eunuch, or one who has no understanding.

Together with suitable ministers from noble families who are clever, loyal, and very learned, you should examine all the ideas of ascetics and of those who are living in any of the four religious Patterns of Life. Thus will you know the highest Law of all beings, and your Meritorious, Lawful Deeds will not vanish from sight in your land nor in the lands of your enemies.

Law, Riches, and Love—Law should be the highest of these. In this world and the next the man who knows Law enjoys happiness.

Men abandon their wives and even their lives when they receive high honors.°

50 The winning over of the people, making gifts, sweet speech, diligence,

* = the Lord of Death.

and cleanliness, son, are the great producers of well-being: Do not ever neglect these, Māndhātar.

The king should always take care; he should see his own and his enemy's weak points, but his enemy should not see his weak points. The king should assail the enemy at his weak points. This was the conduct of Vāsava,* Yama, Varuṇa, and all the royal seers; you must observe it too. Put into action the conduct to which the royal seers were devoted. Take to the divine path right away, O bull of the Bharatas. For, Bhārata, in this world and in the next those of unlimited power—Gods, seers, ancestors, Gandharvas—praise the king who has lived by Lawful Deeds.

Bhīṣma said:

55 After Utathya had said this to him, King Māndhātar did this without hesitating, and by himself he acquired the earth. You too, good sir, a lord of the earth exactly like Māndhātar, one protecting the earth by doing Lawful Deeds, shall reach a place in heaven.

(84l) Law, Force, and War

12.93–107 (B. 92–106; C. 3463–3956)

12.93–95 (92–94; 3463–3534) (84l-1) The Song Sung by the Seer Vāmadeva to King Vasumanas.

96 (95; 3535). Yudhiṣṭhira asks how conquest can be Lawful when a kṣatriya makes war against another kṣatriya. Bhīṣma recites a number of different rules for war-making—no attacking a warrior who is not equipped, no attacking chariots with cavalry, no use of poisoned arrows, and so forth (1–10). Bhīṣma quotes Manu on the necessity of observing Law in warfare, and condemns vigorously the king who conquers and prospers Unlawfully (10–20).
97 (96; 3557). Bhīṣma continues, stating that the only lasting conquest is one that is won Lawfully (1). He then recites rules for the treatment of captives, women who have been taken, and the use of seized property (1–5). More rules for war-making and more exhortations to wage war Lawfully follow (5–10). Newly conquered territories should be won over with conciliation, lest their people work to ruin the new king. The king should not torture his enemies (10–15). Bhīṣma concludes by describing a conquest of Indra's and

* = Indra.

gives other, royal, examples of appropriate and inappropriate conquest (15–20).
98 (97; 3581). Yudhiṣṭhira attacks kṣatriya war-making as evil because it slays so many. He also wonders what heavenly worlds a king wins by what deeds. Bhīṣma defends the violence of the kṣatriya Law by arguing that it leads to greater prosperity afterward. It also has defensive value, and the evil in it can afterwards be overcome (1–5). Bhīṣma glorifies the king who makes war for brahmins, who makes himself the sacrificial post in the ritual sacrifice of battle, who suffers myriad wounds without letting up. He wins as many heavenly worlds as he suffers wounds; his suffering is as great as any asceticism. The people should worship the man who defends them like this (10–15). While some men are heroes, others are cowards. Bhīṣma vilifies cowards harshly and at some length (15–20). It is a terrible wrong for a kṣatriya to die on his bed with no wounds of war on his body. The true hero dies with his body lacerated with wounds. Such a man wins the heavenly world of Indra (20–30).
99 (98; 3613). Yudhiṣṭhira asks about the heavenly worlds won by warriors who do not run away in battle. Bhīṣma repeats The Dialogue of Ambarīṣa and Indra. *Ambarīṣa, son of Nābhāga, went to heaven and saw his commander-in-chief* (senāpati) *Sudeva up there, flying about up above him in a chariot. He asked Indra why, in light of his own achievements and Sudeva's tranquil soul, Sudeva was now above him in heaven. Indra replied that Sudeva performed the awesome sacrifice of battle, which in fact every warrior does when he moves to the front line of battle (1–10). Indra then presented a long, detailed analogy of battle and sacrifice (15–40). It included an extended analogy of the battleground after the battle and the river that washes away the ritual paraphernalia at the conclusion of a sacrifice (30–34). Indra then praised courageous warriors, detailing some of their heavenly reward, and excoriated cowards (35–45).*
100 (99; 3664). Bhīṣma continues by recounting a speech King Janaka of Mithilā made to his troops before he did battle with King Pratardana. Before the battle Janaka encouraged his troops with visions of heaven and hell (1–5). Bhīṣma then gives Yudhiṣṭhira specific, practical advice on troop arrangement and cautions him against overpursuing routed troops (5–10). Bhīṣma then praises the importance of heroic warriors for society generally (15).
101 (100; 3682). The means to victory. "Instrumental laws and crooked and straight wisdom." The management of the army for battle (1–5). Weapons, the times to march, different terrains, camp-sites, and so on (5–20). Soldiers not to be attacked (20–25). The reward of heroes. Sample speech for firing up the troops and discouraging cowardice (25–30). Vilification of cowardice (30–35). Generalities on the motives of those who abandon life and go into battle (35). More on the order of battle and motivational tactics (40–45).
102 (101; 3733). The peculiarities of different men on the battlefield. Different specialties of different peoples from different lands (1–5). The different kinds of looks and noises different warriors make in battle (5–15). Bhīṣma finishes by saying warriors are lawless men whose destruction is a good thing (20).
103 (102; 3753). The predictors of an army's victory. Generalities about understanding omens (1). Various omens (5–15). The inexplicable mystery of battles and their outcomes. So war should be avoided if possible (15–20). The fear of battle. Intimidation of the enemy and negotiation (20–25). Forgiveness after conquest is far superior to harshness. Examples of (prevaricating) mollification of the survivors of the conquered dead. Conciliation and Law (25–40).

12.104–7 (B. 103–6; C. 3794–3956) (84l-2) The Conquest of One's Enemy by Indirect Methods.

(84l-1) The Song Sung by the Seer Vāmadeva to King Vasumanas

12.93–95 (92–94; 3463–3534)
93 (92; 3463). Yudhiṣṭhira asks how a Lawful king is able to stay within Law. Bhīṣma responds with the The Song Sung by the Seer Vāmadeva to King Vasumanas *(1). The king should regard Law as more important than Success. He should never act from might alone. He who holds Pleasure highest perishes quickly (1–10). The king should be heedful of Law, and respectful and generous toward his subjects. Over-reliance upon punishment and an unchecked violent nature lead the king to disaster quickly (10–15).*

94 (93; 3482). Vāmadeva continues: Abusive exploitation of weaker peoples by a stronger king's agents leads to quick ruin. The kṣatriya Law calls for respectful and kind treatment of conquered people and kings, regardless of the king's own preferences and whims (1–10). The king should regularly be kind; he should never get upset and become unkind (10). The king's deputies should be prudently chosen (10–15). The king who will successfully protect his subjects needs to preserve himself by prudent wariness (15–20). Military power is fundamental to kingship, and the Meritoriously Lawful king may well die in battle (20). More general advice on ruling, some of it repeating what has already been said. A recurrent theme is that there is a higher level of struggle for a king, one in which the enemies are his inclinations to self-indulgence and unkindness toward others. If he loses to those enemies, all gains are short-lived (20–35). King Yayāti taught this upaniṣad *(35).*

95 (94; 3522). The best victories do not rely upon warfare. Only a king with a solid base should reach for others' land or riches. A solid base consists largely in having the trust and good-will of his soldiers and his people. Vāmadeva concludes with further exhortations to restraint (1–10).

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

93.1 How should a Lawful king who wants to stay within Law act? I ask you this, grandfather, most excellent of the Kurus, please tell it to me.

Bhīṣma said:

On this they recite this ancient account of what was sung by the wise Vāmadeva, who had seen the basic truth of the matter.

There was a king of Kosala by the name of Vasumanas* who was powerful and honest. He questioned the famous great seer Vāmadeva. "Blessed one, teach me a lesson that bears on Law and Profit. Teach me that conduct with which, if I keep to it, I will never fall away from my own particular Lawful Duties."

5 The ascetic Vāmadeva, the best of prayer reciters, spoke to the king as he sat there, his complexion golden, like Yayāti the son of Nahuṣa. "Follow Law alone. There is nothing higher than Law. Kings who keep to Law conquer this earth. The king who regards Law to be higher than Success, who makes his Mind right, excels by his Meritorious, Lawful Deeds. The

* = a king of Ayodhyā; a maternal grandson of Yayāti and stepbrother of Pratardana (a king of Kāśi).

king who countenances Lawless Deeds and acts only from strength is quickly abandoned by both the first and the second.* The king who has for his ministers wicked men who are not strict observers of Law is a slayer of Law, and he ought to be slain by the people. He perishes quickly, together

10 with all his retinue. The braggart who does only what he likes, who does not pursue Riches,† perishes quickly, even if he has acquired the entire earth.

"On the other hand, the king who is intelligent, who takes to himself only what is good, who is not resentful, who has his senses under control, grows greater, as does the ocean from its rivers.

"With regard to Merit, Pleasure, Riches, Understanding, and Allies, the king should constantly think, 'I am not full.' For the world's functioning is based upon all these things. As he learns more about them, the king gains glory, fame, Royal Splendor, and subjects. He who is zealous for Law, who ponders Law and Riches, who undertakes projects only after careful examination, certainly enjoys greatness.

15 "The king who is not generous, who is not very affectionate, who motivates his subjects only with the rod of punishment, who is violent by nature, perishes very quickly. The stupid king does not see with any insight the evil he has done; lashed to infamy, he lives in the Naraka hell after he dies. Whereas when the king is respectful, generous, unsullied, and sophisticated,° men try to check any vice that springs up in him as if it were their own.

> "The king who has no teacher for Law, who does not question others about Law, who is governed only by the pleasures he knows in acquiring Riches, does not enjoy greatness very long.
>
> "He who subordinates himself to a teacher with regard to the Laws, who himself looks into matters, who subordinates himself to Law with regard to his people, does enjoy greatness for a very long time."

Vāmadeva said:

94.1 When someone stronger implements a Lawless practice toward someone weak,‡ his associates then make their living from that practice. They imitate their king who instituted that evil, and that country with those wrongly trained men quickly perishes. When his men make their living from such a practice when the king is in his normal state,° not even his own people will tolerate it when he comes into difficult straits. When

* That is, Merit and Success, dharma and artha.

† That is, a man for whom kāma is most important.

‡ The general context of the first part of this chapter is that of a king imposing some measure on newly conquered populations.

the king has a violent nature and behaves outrageously, when he does not exhibit the kingly characteristics described in the Learned Teachings, he perishes very quickly.

5 The kṣatriya who does not conform to the perpetually enacted practices for the losers and winners of war departs from the Law of the *kṣatra.*

The king who has captured in battle an enemy who has worked against him and then, out of hatred, fails to offer him respect, departs from the Law of the *kṣatra.*

The king should be gracious, and, if able to do so, he should offer compassionate relief to those in distress. He becomes the favorite of the people, and he does not lose his splendid riches. If someone has done an unkindness to him, he should then do a greater kindness to that one in return. A man who is not liked would quickly become liked were he to behave kindly. The king should avoid ironic comments, do favors unbidden, and never shun a Lawful obligation because of some fancy, 10 because he is upset, or because of some aversion. And he should never shy away from questions, nor make statements that are easily refuted, nor be hasty, nor ever be resentful—this is how an enemy is really taken!

The king should never get too excited when a kindness is done for him, nor get too upset at an unkindness. Bearing in mind the welfare of his subjects, he should not be confused when his business encounters difficulties. The king who does kindness regularly because of his virtues has all his works succeed. The Goddess Royal Splendor never leaves him. The king should favor him who has quit being refractory, who is now behaving favorably toward him, and he should favor the one who is loyally devoted to him; that is the way the strictly observant in this world behave.

For a large job, the king should commission someone who is wise and not scatter-brained, someone who is absolutely faithful, honest, able, and 15 attached to him. Likewise, he should not appoint to any job anyone who, though he is endowed with just those qualities, is not fond of the king; nor one who is resentful toward his master's business affairs. The Goddess Royal Splendor does leave the king who would appoint to a large task anyone who is a fool, who is sensual, greedy, of ignoble conduct, or a cheat; anyone who has flunked a loyalty test, who is cruel, who has poor powers of understanding, has little learning, has squandered his gains, is addicted to intoxicants, or is addicted to gambling, women, or hunting.

Now when a king protects his own self while he protects those he is supposed to protect, his subjects thrive, and he certainly enjoys greatness. One should carefully watch all who are kings by using allies not recognized 20 as such; thus is the king not harmed. After wronging a mighty king, one should not feel encouraged at the thought, "I am a long way from him."

As with hawks and their prey, such kings swoop down upon their victims unawares.

The king whose base is solid, who is solid himself, and who has taken stock of his own strength, may attack those who are weak, but not those who are stronger.

Having acquired a land through bold prowess, the king who guards his subjects Lawfully and is dedicated to doing his Lawful Duty might well meet his death in battle. Everything in this world ends in death; there is nothing here that is free of ill. Therefore the king who abides in the Good Law should guard his subjects by doing his Lawful Duty.

The land thrives in the course of Time with these five things: Defensive locations, war, government according to Law, the consideration of advice, 25 and happiness. Most excellent of kings, the king who has these well secured, and who is constantly busy with regard to them, enjoys this land. Nor is one man alone able to look after all of these continuously; after appointing reliable men to them, the king enjoys the land for a long time.

When a man is generous, supports others with shares, is gentle, is honest, has not forsaken his humanity, then people make him their favorite.

The king who has understood the very highest knowledge and put it into practice then discards his own opinions, and the people obey him. When a king does not suffer the opinion of an ally because it opposes his own; listens to opposed viewpoints without interest after a short while; 30 understands not at all the ideas regarding the losers and the winners of war, ideas that have been enacted by sophisticated people, then does he depart from the Law of the *kṣatra.*

The king who ignores his principal ministers and makes vile men his favorites meets with disaster, and in his affliction he never finds a safe place to ford the stream. When a king's spirit is inconstant and he is constantly angry; when he has no affection for his kinsmen though they have excellent attributes, but rather feels hatred for them, then his Riches do not stay near him. But when a king uses kindness to control people who are well endowed with good qualities, but who are not dear to his heart, then he stands in glory for a long time.

The king should not implement projects at inappropriate times; he should never get upset at an unkindness, nor should he get too excited when someone does him a kindness; he should engage himself in some healthy work.

35 The king should always worry, "Who are the kings who are fond of me? Which ones have sought me out because they are afraid? Who among them pose me the problem of being actually neutral?" A king who is strong should never trust one who is weak; for, like *bhāruṇḍa* birds, they swoop down upon their prey unawares. A man with a wicked mind hates a

master who has every good quality and speaks kindly—one should be afraid of that man.°

Yayāti* son of Nahuṣa uttered this secret teaching for kings:

"One who is engaged in human conquest slays the highest enemies."°

Vāmadeva said:

95.1 The king should make his victory greater by not using warfare. King, they say the victory won by war is the worst kind.

He should not try to acquire what he does not possess if his base is not too solid, for acquisition does not come to the king whose base is weak. He whose country is swollen with prosperity, splendid in every way, and devoted to its king; he whose friends are plump and contented—he is a king with a solid base. He whose soldiers are contented and in good spirits; whose soldiers are well placed in positions that mislead his enemies—he 5 is a king who conquers land with minimal use of his army. He whose people—both those in the city and those in the countryside—are all strongly attached to him (as he honors them well); whose people all have wealth and good stocks of grain—he is a king with a solid base.

A discerning king should try to take the land or the riches of others when he judges that strength and timing are better for himself.

When the king moves expeditiously and his person is well protected; when he has no taste for luxurious indulgences, but is sympathetic toward his subjects, then his realm prospers. When a king acts falsely toward his own people though they behave perfectly rightly, he then cuts through his own self, as one hews a tree with an axe. There is no end of those who hate the king who is always killing, whereas no one hates the king who knows how to restrain his anger.

10 The wise king does no deed that the noble people find odious; he should charge himself with those wholesome deeds for which the noble people long.° Then, when he wants to indulge in pleasures, others do not despise him, and his soul is not tormented, not even when work remains to be done.°

The king who behaves this way toward men stands firm in his victories, having conquered both worlds.

Bhīṣma said:

After Vāmadeva told him this, the king did all of it. If you do likewise, you too will win these two worlds, no doubt of it.

* = Vasumanas's maternal grandfather; "secret teaching" is *upaniṣat*.

(84l) Law, Force, and War (Continued)

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

96.1 When a kṣatriya tries to conquer another kṣatriya in war, how can his conquest be Lawful?° I have asked you this, please tell me.

Bhīṣma said:

The king who has arrived at a country, whether he has come with allies or has come without allies, should say, "I am your king and I shall protect you always. Pay me the Lawful tax. Will you accept me?" If they choose this one who has come there, all will be well. Should they not be kṣatriyas but oppose him somehow, they are to be restrained by any and all means, 5 for they are doing work that is not right for them to do. Now another* may take up weapons with the thought that the kṣatriya† is not capable of victory, or that he is incapable of protecting the country,‡ or that he is trying for too much.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

Now how should one fight against a kṣatriya king who attacks another kṣatriya. Tell me this, grandfather.

Bhīṣma said:

One should not fight in battle a kṣatriya who is not equipped§ for war, one who is without armor. A single warrior should be addressed by a single warrior, "You shoot," and "I am shooting." If one comes who is equipped, then he should be equipped. If one comes with an army, then he, backed with his army, should challenge him. If one should make war against him deceitfully, then he should attack that one with deceit. And if he makes war Righteously, then one should oppose him Righteously.

10 One should not attack chariots with cavalry; chariot warriors should attack chariots. One should not assail someone in distress, neither to scare him nor to defeat him. There should be no arrows smeared with poison, nor any barbed arrows—these are weapons of evil people.

War should be waged for the sake of conquest; one should not be enraged toward an enemy who is not trying to kill him.

If, upon an outbreak of hostilities among strictly righteous people, a righteous man gets into trouble on the battlefield, then one who is wounded should not be attacked in any way, nor one who has no son, one whose sword is broken, one whose horse has been destroyed, one whose bowstring has been cut, nor one whose vehicle has been destroyed.

* = another kṣatriya. † = the invader. ‡ Should he become king.
§ = armed, and with armor tied on.

One wounded should be given medical treatment in your realm; or he may even be sent to his own home. One not wounded should be released—this is the everlasting Law.

Therefore Manu son of the Self-Existent said that war must be waged according to Law. The Law of the strictly observant always applies among the strictly observant; having resorted to it, one should never cause it to
15 disappear. The prosperous kṣatriya who conquers Unlawfully is a wicked man living upon dishonest gain, and he slays himself on his own. A king should defeat these wicked deeds of the wicked by virtuous means. Death met through Lawful Deeds is better than victory gained by evil deeds. King, an Unlawful Deed one has done does not bear fruit immediately,° like a cow; it trails after one, burning his roots and his branches. A wicked king is thrilled when he takes property with wicked deeds. Thriving upon his theft, that wicked man becomes addicted to evil. Smiling contemptuously at honest men, thinking, "Law does not exist," he approaches his
20 destruction because of his lack of faith. He is bound by Varuṇa's nooses, though he thinks he is immortal; his own deeds make him expand, like a big, inflated leather bag. Then he is grabbed along with his base, like a tree from the bank of a river; and they rejoice that he is smashed, smashed like a clay pot on a stone.

Thus a king should be pleased to try to win his conquests Lawfully.

Bhīṣma said:

97.1 The king should not try to win land Unlawfully; having won an Unlawful conquest, what king would admit to it? The conquest that involves Lawlessness does not last, and it does not lead to heaven. It ruins the king and the land as well, O bull of the Bharatas.

If he has captured a man who has discarded his sword, whose armor is broken to pieces, who pleads with his hands folded in supplication, saying, "I am yours," then he should not harm that man. A king should not wage war against anyone who has already been defeated by force.
5 Should he* pass a year there, he would be born again from him.° A girl that has been taken by force cannot be touched sooner than a year. It is exactly the same for all wealth and anything else that has been taken by force. But that wealth should not be allowed to stand idle: The brahmins should drink the milk, the oxen should be worked; or else he should let it rest at the time.†°

A king should fight against a king, thus does Law ordain. No other man who is not a king should ever assail° a king in any way. If a brahmin seeking to make peace should go between two armies clashing in battle, neither should make war then. Should anyone injure a brahmin, he would

* = the captive.

† That is, he should not appropriate it, if he will not use it; or he should repatriate it.

break an everlasting law.° And if someone who calls himself a kṣatriya should violate this law, he is not to be praised, and afterwards he shall not
10 be received in the assembly. The king who seeks victory shall not follow the way that violates Law, that breaks laws; for what winnings could be superior to a conquest won Lawfully?

After he has violently forced the inhabitants to bow down, the king should mollify them very quickly with conciliatory speeches and gifts of luxuries: This is the very best policy for kings to follow. For if the inhabitants are bent down unduly, if they suffer affliction in their own country, they shall then wait upon the king's enemies and wait expectantly for a flood of misfortunes. Quickly they will propitiate his enemies when there is an emergency. Completely alienated in every way, they long for disasters to befall the king.

The king's enemy should not be abused, nor tortured in any way; even
15 when tortured, a man gives up his life only once. For the offender actually takes satisfaction when even a little torture is applied to himself; such a man thinks repeatedly that it is just life and nothing more.

The king whose country is swollen with prosperity, splendid in every way, and devoted to its king; whose companions and dependents are contented—he is a king with a solid base. When the king honors his honorable priests, house-priests, learned teachers, and others esteemed for their learning, he is called "Conqueror of Worlds." The highest of the Gods* gained the earth by this conduct, and kings then sought conquest in the way of Indra's conquest. Having defeated the king in battle and conquered the city, but not the surrounding country, Pratardana† took away forever
20 their immortal plants. Divodāsa took their Agnihotra rites, the remnants of their Fire, the offerings, and the bowls and dishes for the rites; because of that he was thwarted. Bhārata, King Nābhāga gave his countries with their kings as a present to his ritual priests, excepting the property of learned brahmins and the property of ascetics.

The ancient kings who knew Law behaved in every way high and low, Yudhiṣṭhira. I enjoy it all very much.

The king who desires his own welfare should seek victory from an excess of every kind of learning there is; not by magic nor by dissimulation.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

98.1 There is no Law more evil than the Law of the *kṣatra*, O bull of the Bharatas. In launching campaigns and waging war a king slays many people. And, learned man, as I wish to understand this, tell me about those deeds by which a king wins heavenly worlds, O bull of the Bharatas.

Bhīṣma said:

By restraining the wicked and encouraging the virtuous, and by rites of sacrificial worship and giving gifts, kings become pure and free of taint.

* = Indra.

† = a king of Kāśi; maternal grandson of Yayāti and the son of Divodāsa.

Kings trouble their people when they seek conquest, but after they have
5 won the victory they make their subjects thrive once again. They drive their evil deeds away through the power of gifts, sacrifices, and asceticism. Their merit increases through their kindness to their subjects. Just as the reaper° of a field kills the weeds and the grain at the time he mows the field, but does not get rid of the grain; so, kings slay those they want to kill at the time they shoot their sharp-bladed weapons, and the entire atonement for that is the king's making the inhabitants flourish once again. The king who guards his subjects from the plunder of their wealth, from slaughter, from affliction by barbarians—he, because he gives life, is truly a king bestowing wealth and happiness. Worshiping with all the rites of sacrifice, giving safety as the present to the priests, that king will experience blessings and reach the same heavenly world as Indra.

10 When a king goes out and makes war for the sake of some business of brahmins that has come up, his sacrifice is one that bestows endless presents on the priests, for he has erected his own body as the pole of the sacrifice.° Fearless, tossing enemies about, absorbing the arrows of the enemy°—the thirty* never see anything better than this on the earth! However many sharp blades cut his skin in battle, that many heavenly worlds does he enjoy, heavenly worlds that fulfill his every wish and never fade away! His limbs are always bloody,° even though he swings them this way and that°—truly he is released from all his evil deeds by that red smear! None of the sufferings of asceticism† are greater than the pains he endures as his wounds burn! Those who know Law take cognizance of
15 that. Cowards, the lowest of men, move to the rear in battle, wanting to be protected by the hero, the way people want life from the rain God Parjanya.

If a heroic warrior would defend them like this in peacetime, as well as when there is danger, then people should make an image of him; but it does not happen like that. If always they paid him homage in recognition for what he's done, they would only be doing what is right and proper; but it does not happen like that.

Among men of the same kind, there are big differences observed at the front line of the army in a battle, with all the shrieking and hollering, and with enemies storming at them. The heroic warrior rushes forward upon his enemies; in a difficult spot, the coward, taking a way that leads not to
20 heaven, abandons his companions and flees. Never give birth, son, to vile men like these, who abandon their comrades in battle and go to their comfortable homes. The Gods, starting with Indra, make misfortune for them. They might slay with sticks or stones the man who tries to save his own life by abandoning his comrades; or they might burn him in a fire with straw-mats.° Or they might kill like animals° any kṣatriyas who act that way.

* = the Gods. † = *tapas*.

It is not Right that a kṣatriya should die upon his bed, coughing up phlegm and bile, weeping pitifully. When a kṣatriya approaches his demise with uninjured body, then those who know the olden times do not praise
25 his deeds. Son, it is not approved that kṣatriyas die at home—for proud men to do so is not manly, is not Right, is wretched. Bellowing, "This is miserable!" "This is terrible!" "What an evil this is!" his face sagging, stinking, making his family grieve terribly, he envies healthy men, and over and over he wishes for death. A proud hero who has some self-respect does not deserve such a death. A kṣatriya who has slaughtered enemies in battles ought to die surrounded by his kinsmen, his body completely mangled by the sharp blades of weapons. The hero suffused with oaths and rage fights hard and does not even notice his limbs being cut by the enemy.
30 Having suffered a death in battle that is celebrated and honored in the world, having gained abundant Merit for himself, he goes to the same heavenly world that Indra is in.

Every heroic warrior inspired to sacrifice his highest, having abandoned his life, never showing his back to the enemy, reaches the same heavenly world as Indra.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

99.1 What heavenly worlds do those heroes who fight in battle without retreating get when they meet their end? Tell me that, grandfather.

Bhīṣma said:

Yudhiṣṭhira, on this they recite this ancient account of the dialogue between King Ambarīṣa* and Indra. King Ambarīṣa, son of Nābhāga, went to heaven that is so hard to reach and saw one of his ministers there with Śakra† in the world of the Gods. It was the lord commander of his armies, and he was traveling up, up, up in a superbly marvelous chariot that blazed with every color.

5 When the noble-minded king Ambarīṣa had seen his commander Sudeva going up into the sky and had taken note of that one's good fortune, he said to Vāsava‡ in amazement, "O Vāsava, I faced forward and conquered enemy armies in battle after ruling this entire earth to its ocean ends in accordance with the prescriptions of Law; after devoting myself to the System of the Four Orders of Society in accordance with the Learned Teachings out of a desire for Merit; after studying the Vedas in accordance with the rules—with intensely difficult celibacy and providing service to the family of my teacher—and then studying the Learned Teachings for kings completely; after refreshing first my guests with food and drink, then my ancestors with the Svadhā offering, thirdly the seers with my recitations of the Veda and consecrations to perform solemn sacrificial

* = legendary king famous for his sacrifices and his generosity; see *MBh* 12.29.93–96.
† = Indra, the king of the Gods.
‡ = Indra.

rites, and finally the Gods with the best of the sacrificial rites; after observing the Law of *kṣatra* according to the Learned Teachings and according to the rules. O King of Gods, this is Sudeva, who was the commander of my army. He was a warrior with a completely tranquil soul—why is he past me now? He did not worship the Gods with the principal rites, he did not refresh the brahmins according to the prescriptions. Śakra, why is he past me?"

Indra said:

Son, this Sudeva performed the tremendous sacrifice of battle, and so does any other man who wages war: Every warrior equipped for battle is ritually consecrated, and when he goes to the front of the army he gains the right to perform the sacrifice of battle—that's a settled conclusion.

Ambarīṣa said:

What are the offerings in this sacrifice? What the clarified butter? What are the presents for the priests in it? And who are supposed to be the priests? Tell me this, O Śatakratu.*

Indra said:

The elephants there are the priests, and the horses are the *adhvaryu* priests. The chunks of the enemy's flesh are the offerings, and their blood is the clarified butter. Jackals, vultures, and ravens sit in the ritual assembly and are participants in the solemn rite. They drink what remains of the clarified butter, and they eat the offerings of the rite. The masses of darts, lances, swords, spears, and battle-axes—blazing, hardened, and whetted°—are the *sruc* ladles of each of the rite's partakers. The keen arrow—straight, hardened, and whetted—racing away from the bow's violent thrust° and splitting the body of an enemy is his great *sruva* ladle. Sheathed in a tiger-skin scabbard,° its grip made from an elephant's tusk, the sword wielded in battle by an elephant trunk of an arm would be his *sphya* stirrer. The blows landed with the keen darts, spears, and battle-axes of fused steel°—gleaming, hardened, and whetted—would be its riches. The blood which runs upon the earth from the violence in a battle is its full libation, the rich cow from which all wishes flow.

When shouts of "Cut!" and "Smash!" are heard at the front line of the army, it is the rite's *sāman*-singers singing their *sāmans* in the house of Yama, the lord of the dead.

Now they say his "Soma-Cart Shed"° is the front line of the enemy's army, and the heap of elephants, horses, and armored warriors is ordained to be the piled up fire altar called the "Hawk Altar" for his sacrifice.† A headless corpse standing upright there in the midst of the thousands slain is that mighty warrior's octagonal, Khādira wood slaughter-post.°‡ The

* = Indra.
† See the endnotes for the spatial analogy here.
‡ = *yūpa*, the "pole of the sacrifice"; see the endnote to 12.98.10.

trumpetings of the elephants goaded with hooks make the stream of chants for the secondary libations, while the resounding crack of a palm-slap is the signal for the offering "Vaṣaṭ!" The big kettledrum known in the battle as "Three Songs" is said to be main singer at this rite.

If someone offers his own dear body in battle when brahmin property is being taken, then his sacrifice is one that bestows endless presents on the priests, for he has erected his own body as the pole of the sacrifice.

> The heroic warrior who, for the sake of his lord, attacks at the front of the army and does not turn back out of fear—he has heavenly worlds like mine.
>
> He who strews the altar area with dark blue swords shaped like the crescent moon° and severed arms that look like spiked clubs—he has heavenly worlds like mine.
>
> He who is committed to victory and expects no one to accompany him as he penetrates into the middle of the enemy army—he has heavenly worlds like mine.

There is a river floating with rafts° made of spears, it has kettledrums for its frogs and turtles. The bones of heroes are the gravel in its bed that make it hard to wade in, as does its slimy mud of flesh and blood. Swords and shields are the boats that float upon it; human hair its thick green moss;° its rocky rapids are formed of the shattered carcasses of horses, elephants, and chariots; banners and flags are the reeds along its shore.° Overflowing its banks, its stream of blood bearing away the dead animals, it is hard to cross even by men thoroughly familiar with it.* Slain elephants are the great crocodiles in this unholy river that carries men on to the next world. A knobby backbone° of spears, swords, and flags prowled by man-eating "water-fowl"— vultures, storks, and jungle crows°—it completely demoralizes timid men. Tradition teaches that this river is the concluding bath of the warrior's great sacrifice.

> He who strews the altar area with the heads of his enemies and piles of his enemies' horses and elephants—he has heavenly worlds like mine.

The experts say that that† belongs to him° who has made the "Wife's Hut"° the front line of the enemy army and the "Soma-Cart Shed" the front line of his own army—the fires within the "Seat"° (with the "Fire-Kindling Shed" on the north side) are his soldiers. He who has the enemy army for his wife° soon gains all heavenly worlds. When there is a battle-formation

* = *pāraga*, "expert"; "one who has crossed to the further shore"; also "one who is on his way to the further shore." See second endnote at 99.32.
† = the reward of heavenly worlds like Indra's just mentioned.

on both sides and open space between them, that is the altar area for a rite,° and the three Vedas are always its three fires.

> But when a warrior is frightened and retreats and is then slain by the enemy, he goes to the hell that has no bottom, no doubt about it.
>
> 40 He whose gushing blood forms a flooding river dotted with hair and flesh and bones, he goes the highest course.
>
> But he who slays a commander of the army and then mounts his chariot, he strides with the boldness of Viṣṇu, he has the wits of Bṛhaspati.
>
> He who captures an enemy leader alive, or a warrior who sets their standard, or one who is honored among them—he has heavenly worlds like mine.
>
> One should never mourn for a hero cut down in battle; for there is nothing sad about him—the slain hero is exalted in a heavenly world.

People need not make offerings of food or libations for the slain warrior, nor take any purifying bath, nor observe any period of impurity. Hear what 45 are his heavenly worlds from me. Thousands of the best Apsarases rush up to the heroic warrior slain in battle, saying, "Let him be my husband." This ascetic suffering* is meritorious, it is the everlasting Law; all four of the religious Patterns of Life† belong to the man who does not flee in battle.

Old men and children‡ are not to be slain in war, nor women, nor brahmins, nor anyone who has filled his mouth with grass,° nor anyone who says, "I am yours."

I became overlord of the Gods after cutting down in battle Vṛtra, Bala, Pāka, Virocana with his hundred magic illusions, Namuci so hard to fend off, Śambara of many magic illusions, Vipracitti the Daitya, and Prahrāda—all sons of Danu.

Bhīṣma said:

50 After he heard this speech of Śakra's and assented to it, Ambarīṣa mastered for himself the perfection of warriors.

Bhīṣma said:

100.1 On this they recite this ancient account from when King Pratardana§ and the king of Mithilā did battle. Wearing the ritual thread for the purpose of making war, King Janaka of Mithilā fired up his warriors. Pay attention

* = *tapas.*

† Presumably this statement refers to the merit of living in the *āśramas.*

‡ Text note: see first endnote at 99.47.

§ = son and successor of Divodāsa, king of the Kāśis; Yayāti was his maternal grandfather.

to this, Yudhiṣṭhira. King Janaka of Mithilā was an exalted man who understood the fundamental realities of all things. He conjured up visions of heaven and hell for his warriors.

"Look at these brilliantly shining celestial worlds for those who do not fear! They overflow with Gandharva girls and furnish everything you 5 could wish for! They will never waste away. On the other side are these hells for those that run away. They will fall into them immediately and endure everlasting ignominy as well. Having seen these worlds, having resolved to give up your lives, be victorious over the enemy and do not end up as subjects in the bottomless hell. The unsurpassed gate into heaven rests upon the base of heroes' giving up their lives."° So did the king address his soldiers, O conqueror of enemy cities. And those soldiers defeated their enemies in battle, bringing joy to their lord.

Therefore, the king must ever stand at the head of the battle, in full possession of himself. The chariot-warriors should be amidst the elephants, the horsemen after the chariots, the infantry should be positioned in tight 10 ranks° amidst the horsemen. The king who arrays his troops like this always conquers his enemies. Therefore, Yudhiṣṭhira, it should always be arranged this way.

All who want the deed done well and all who are extremely zealous to fight well, should stir the troops up the way monsters churn up the ocean. Mutually reinforcing each other, the soldiers should inspire those that are hanging back.

He should be sure to keep any land he has won and not overpursue troops that have broken and run. When those troops have given up all hope of living and turn around, their charge is not easy to withstand, king. So one should not overpursue.

Heroic warriors ought not try to attack those fleeing because of the danger they present; so one should not overpursue those that are fleeing.

> 15 Beings that do not move are food for those that move, those without teeth are food for those with teeth, those without hands are food for those with hands, and cowards are food for the heroic warrior.
>
> * Though their hands and feet and bellies and backs are just the same, cowards trail behind the heroic warrior. Those that are fearful seek out the heroic warriors, falling down before them, beseeching them with hands joined in supplication.

Like children, all in the world depend upon the arms of heroic warriors, always. So heroic warriors deserve honor under all conditions. In all the

* One proto-classical upajāti triṣṭubh.

three worlds there is found nothing that is superior to the hero's fighting. The heroic warrior protects everything; everything depends upon the heroic fighter.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

101.1 O Grandfather, bull of the Bharatas, tell me how those who seek victory lead their army, even squeezing Law a bit.

Bhīṣma said:

Some Laws stand by virtue of Reality, others by virtue of their reasonableness, others because they are what piously upright men do, and others have instrumental value. I will declare to you instrumental laws, whose ends are accomplished for the sake of Merit or Riches.

Barbarians without laws are the opponents. I shall declare to you a Vedic text so you can strike back at them. Listen to these means for the complete accomplishment of your duties.

There are two understandings one must know, Bhārata, the straight and the crooked. Though aware of the crooked way of understanding, the king should not make regular use of it; he may use it to counteract 5 mischief that may occur,° as when his enemies treat with the king while sowing dissension in his kingdom, and, perceiving this mischief, the king thwarts those enemies.

Hides from the sides of elephants and bulls, and skins from boas, and iron "teeth" and mail° are thought suitable for body-shields. Blades hardened and sharpened; sets of body armor made of hardened iron; banners and flags colored with many bright dyes; sharpened spears, lances, swords, and battleaxes; and shield-planks and shield-hides should be provided in abundance. The weapons should be fit, and the soldiers should have practiced.

It is recommended that the army be set to work on the full-moon day of the month of Caitra,° or of Mārgaśīrṣa; the earth's crops should be ripe, and 10 the land should still have water. The time should not be too cold nor too warm, Bhārata, therefore the king should set it working then; or when his enemies are experiencing difficulties. Using the army to obstruct one's enemies at such times is recommended.

A flat, easily passable road that is provided with water and grass is recommended; the king should order repeated scrutiny by spies who are skilled men of the woods. The army should not be forced to go by freshly cut ways through the wilderness, as if they were herds of animals.

Therefore, with all armies, kings who seek victory put them to work.

Recommended are camping sites that have water, that are clear all around, and that are difficult to approach; this prevents enemies sneaking up. A clearing near a forest is thought to be even better by many excellent 15 men thoroughly versed in warfare: The forest affords a place for retreating soldiers to regroup,° a place for hiding the infantry, a place for making a

counterattack against the enemy, and it is the final refuge in the event of a rout. Having put the constellation of the seven seers* behind them, they should fight, being as unmovable as mountains.

In this way, king, a king should seek to conquer even those enemies who are hard to defeat. On account of the Wind, on account of the Sun, on account of Śukra† there may be victory: Each one earlier is superior to what is after it; but best, Yudhiṣṭhira, is the conjunction of them.

Men thoroughly versed in warfare recommend as terrain for the cavalry an area that has no mud, no water, no barriers, and no clods. A level, open area without any water is recommended as the terrain for chariots. An area with short trees, an abundance of undergrowth, and water is 20 recommended for those who fight with elephants. An area that has many narrow passes, great trees, and patches of cane and bamboo is well suited to the infantry; and so are woods and hills. An army with a multitude of foot soldiers is very solid, Bhārata. An army with a multitude of chariots and cavalry is recommended for days with fair weather. An army with a multitude of infantry and elephants is recommended for the rainy season.

Having taken full account of these attributes, the king should decide the place and the time. The king who goes out having considered things in this way is favored by the celestial bodies and the day,‡ and, utilizing his army perfectly, he always takes the victory.

He should not attack soldiers who are asleep, who are thirsty, who are exhausted, who are not ready;° nor when any is eliminating bodily waste, 25 dying, or trembling in terror; nor at times of eating and drinking; nor when they have been routed, thoroughly routed, defeated, or are starving;° nor those who are completely at ease, or have begun some project, or who are plagued by a pledge to return° (men moving outside their camp, having put down a pledge to return, or men who are returning home); nor men who congregate at a particular gate in accordance with tradition, nor those who are sentinels circling a camp on horseback.

Those who punch an opening through the enemy army, and those who make a broken place in one's own disappear—these men should have food and drink the same as yours and twice their normal pay; those that command ten should be made to command a hundred. And you should make the heroic warrior who never wearies the overlord of a thousand of these.

Having caused his soldiers to assemble according to rank, they should be addressed, "We take a solemn oath for victory in battle. We will not 30 abandon each other. Any of us who are afraid must refrain from the battle

* = Ursa Major.

† = a planet, the "Bright One," Venus; also the name of the wise Bhārgava brahmin advisor of the Asuras.

‡ = the lunar day, *tithi*.

right here and now, lest they slaughter us by opening breaches in our ranks after the battle has begun. Fleeing, one slays himself and his whole side in the battle. Upon fleeing one suffers the loss of his property, execution, ignominy, and a bad reputation. Disagreeable and unpleasant words are the lot of the man who flees battle, his lips quivering and his teeth chattering, having dropped all his weapons, having abandoned his comrades when their lives were at risk. It is the same for one who has obligated himself to the enemy. May it be so for our enemies.

"Those who turn and run away are subhumans; merely increasing
35 their number, they are nothing in this world nor in the next. All excited, the enemy will rush up to a deserter with praise and good wishes, son, the way his friends will rush up to a man who has just won a fight.

"When your enemies rejoice at your setbacks, I think that pain is harder to endure than being killed.

"Understand that the Goddess Royal Splendor* is the basis of Law and of all happiness; she goes to the enemies of cowardly men; a heroic warrior goes to her.

"We, desiring heaven, having let go of our lives to do battle, shall deserve to gain the course of strictly observant men, whether we win victory or are killed." Having sworn this oath, having completely given up their lives, heroic men fearlessly plunge into the enemy army.

40 In front there should be a line of men with swords and shields, in the rear a line of ox-carts, and in the middle the wives.

The infantry should be concealed so they can counterattack the enemy. Those who lead the way should be ferociously eager for that enemy. And those in the van who are proud, courageous, and determined should attack first, and the other men should follow them.

An effort should be made to fire up even the cowards. They should be able to stand the mere sight of the enemy's troops, and proximity to them. He may make a few men fight in close ranks, or if he wishes, spread many men far apart. (The "needle-tipped" front should consist of a few men along with many.)

45 When the battle is raging at the peak of its fury, he should take a party of many men and cry out, "The enemies have broken! They've broken," whether that be true or false. Or, "The army of our allies has come! Attack without fear!" The men should run after him, shouting and hollering terrifying yells. They should sound battle cries and holler, blow conch-shells, play *krakacas* and horns, beat kettle-drums, tambourines, cymbals, and make the elephants trumpet loudly.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

102.1 Bhārata, when men go into battle, what are their customary ways of

* = Śrī.

behaving, what particular exertions do they make, what are their physical appearances? What armor have they strapped on, and what weapons do they use, king?

Bhīṣma said:

Just as weapons and vehicles are designed exactly as they were made in the past, so a man does his work just as it was done by others before him. Gāndhāras, Sindhus, Sauvīras, and Ābhīras° fight with claws and darts and are very potent. Their armies are fully conversant with all weapons. The Uśīnaras are skilled in every kind of weapon and are courageous.
5 Easterners are skilled in elephant battles and fight deceitfully. Likewise the Greeks and Kāmbojas and those around Mathurā are skilled in hand-to-hand fighting. Southerners fight with swords and shields. Warriors with great courage and great strength are born everywhere. I have described the general trend. Hear now the specific indications.

With roars and eyes like those of lions and tigers, moving like lions and tigers, all warriors, even ones with eyes like those of doves and sparrows, rack their enemies severely. Others make the sounds of deer, some have the eyes of tigers, and some the eyes of bulls; the roars of some are extremely ferocious and enraged, some shriek like Kiṃnarīs, some thunder like storm clouds with scowling faces, and others bray like camels; some have crooked noses or deformed legs,° but they can march great distances, and they can
10 throw far. Some heroic warriors are hunched over, like cats; some are slender, some have fair hair and fair skin, and some are nervous—but it is dangerous to confront any of them. Some blink like lizards. There are even some that have mild natures. Some move and sound like horses—but they are men on their way to victory. Some are very stout, some are delicate, some are broad-chested, some very nicely proportioned; they dance when music is played and are thrilled when there is a fight. Some have deeply set eyes, others have eyes bulging out; some are reddish brown; some have frowns upon their faces, some have mongoose eyes, and all are heroic warriors who have forsaken their own bodies. Some are cross-eyed, some have broad foreheads, some have bony faces; some have crooked fingers or arms, some are lean, and some are so lean that their veins and ducts bulge
15 out visibly through their tautly stretched skin. When there is a war at hand they rush in violently like rutting bull elephants, and it is dangerous to confront any of them. Some have curly red hair,° some have fleshy cheeks and jowls, some have upraised shoulders, some thick necks; some are huge with thick, bulging calf muscles; some have graceful necks, like birds, stretching upward or bending down; some have round heads, some the faces of serpents, and some seem to have the faces of cats. Making horrible sounds, enraged, racing into battles with howls, cocksure of themselves and paying no heed to Law, dreadful, fierce-looking—all these have given their bodies up; they are at the extreme end, and they are not

turning back; always putting themselves at the front of the troop, they kill and are killed.

20 Lawless men who violate the norms, their destruction is a good thing, for they repeatedly fly into rages in just these ways even towards the king himself.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

103.1 What signs are recounted of the army that will win victory, O bull among men? I want to know about these.

Bhīṣma said:

I shall declare to you completely, O bull among men, the signs that are recounted of the army that will win victory. When the human realm is impelled by Time, it is fate that operates first. Those who understand it see with an eye lengthened by knowledge. Those who understand this render the dangers harmless by performing some rite of expiation: making offerings in the ritual fire, reciting prayers, or doing auspicious things.

5 Bhārata, one can say that the army in which the warriors are all excited, and the animals as well, is certain of victory. Winds blow behind it, and there are rainbows; clouds rain down behind it and so do the sun's rays. When jackals trail after it, and jungle crows and vultures attend the army on every side, then it has unsurpassed success.

> * When the offering fire burns with a clear light and no smoke, its rays moving upward, its flames directed southward, and when the nice smells of offerings waft through—they say this is a harbinger of inevitable victory.
>
> When the deep, bass throbs of kettledrums and the tremendous notes of conch-shells resounding make men eager to fight and not averse to it—they say this is a harbinger of inevitable victory.
>
> 10 Animals behind or to the left of warriors who have started out,° or of those who are about to go, are favored; those to their right mean success. But any who stand before them are a hindrance.
>
> When omen birds with auspicious calls—geese, curlews, woodpeckers, and blue jays—sing out, and warriors grow excited and fill with courage—they say this is a harbinger of inevitable victory.
>
> They will defeat their enemies—they whose army is impossible to look at, so dazzling are the blades of its cutting weapons, its armor, its flags, and the brightly shining faces of its young men.

* Six mixed triṣṭubh stanzas.

> When his army's warriors are obedient and not haughty, when they rely upon each other's friendship and are always honest—they say this is a harbinger of inevitable victory.

When pleasant sounds, touches, and smells proliferate, and when fortitude pervades the soldiers, then that is the face of victory.

15 The left side of one who has entered battle is favored; for one who is about to enter battle, it is his right side. What is behind one brings one's goal to fulfillment, what is before one hinders him.

Yudhiṣṭhira, after assembling a vast, fourfold army, you should first exert yourself to reverse things by means of conciliation, then you should exert yourself in war. Bhārata, the very worst kind of victory is that which involves warfare; victory in war is inexplicable accident or fate—that is how it appears upon reflection. Like a great flood of water, like a herd of animals that has panicked, a vast army that has been broken is impossible to turn around. "We have been beaten!" they say, and they are beaten. Even learned men know no reason for it. A vast army with a noble heart

20 is similar to a herd of deer.° Just fifty heroic soldiers who know each other well, who are keyed up, who have given up all hope of survival, and who are determined can smash an enemy army. And even five, six, or seven well-respected nobles, if they have made a resolve and work together, may completely conquer the enemy forces.

You should never resort to a clash if there is any possibility at all of not doing so. War is said to be the last resort, after conciliation, dividing the enemy, and offering payments.

Fear of an army's making a sneak attack torments the fearful, like fear of a bolt of lightning, "Now where is it going to strike?" When soldiers learn of armies approaching to attack and then go out to meet them, their bodies

25 shiver, as does the body of the realm. The entire realm shudders, king, all that moves and all that stays. When men are burned with the fire of weapons, the very marrow in their bones dissolves.

Towards them one should repeatedly practice conciliation mixed with ferocity, for when they are intensely tormented, one's enemies will go to war every time.°

He should send agents for the purpose of splitting apart his interior enemies.

When the king is superior, a peaceful alliance with him is recommended, for otherwise it would not be possible to press him—in concert with his enemy—in such a way that he is obstructed on every side.

Forgiveness is the magical illusion employed by good men; really, good men are never unforgiving. Learn to use forgiveness and nonforgiveness,

30 son of Pṛthā. The glory of a king who forgives after he conquers grows greater, for even those enemies who have committed grievous offenses

trust him. Śambara says, "Once you have rendered your enemy powerless, forgiveness is thought to be the right thing to do."

"But a piece of wood that has not been thoroughly burned returns again to its original nature."

The learned teachers do not recommend this;* this is not an accurate formulation of what is right. They are to be restrained without tormenting them and without destroying them, as if they were one's own children.

Yudhiṣṭhira, the king who is harsh comes to be hated by his subjects. But they are contemptuous of him if he is gentle, so he should rely upon both.

He should say something nice even as he is about to attack, Bhārata, and even as he attacks. And after he has attacked he should mourn, 35 grieving a little and wailing a little. He makes a speech before them: "It does not please me that he has been slain. I told him repeatedly, 'You did not do what I ordered.' I really wish he were alive! A man such as he was should not have been killed. Good men who do not run away from battle are very hard to come by. Whoever killed him in battle did something that does not please me." Saying such things as this, he should secretly honor the killers. And trying to propitiate these men,† he should lament any offenses committed against any of the killers who were injured, even taking hold of their arms. Behaving with conciliation like this in every situation, the king is liked by his people; and mindful of Law, he has no 40 fears. Bhārata, everyone comes to trust him; and, trusted, he is then in a position to be able to use and consume° as he wishes.

Therefore, the king should inspire trust in everyone without any trickery. He who wishes to use and enjoy the earth must protect it on every side.

(84l-2) *The Conquest of One's Enemy by Indirect Methods*

12.104–7 (B. 103–6; C. 3794–3956)
104 (103; 3794). Yudhiṣṭhira asks how the king should proceed against different kinds of enemies. Bhīṣma relates The Dialogue of Indra and Bṛhaspati on the Conciliation of One's Enemy. *Indra went to Bṛhaspati and asked how he might deal with offensive neighbors without destroying them by the typical means, warfare (1–5). Bṛhaspati answered by recommending against immediately violent responses to*

* = the "thorough burning" of conquered foes recommended by the unnamed objector quoted after Śambara.
† = the killers.

offenders; duplicity and stealth should be used instead (5–10). Bṛhaspati counseled against destroying a conquered enemy, even though the conquered enemy presents enduring dangers (10–15). Bṛhaspati returned to the theme of stealthy waiting for an opportunity to attack, and he emphasized the importance of patience, self-control, and seizing the opportunity when it occurs (15–20). Numerous generalities on dissembling toward one's enemies, biding one's time, vigilance, the quiet use of force, and so on (25–35). Five classical triṣṭubhs address these same points with more emphasis on direct action by the king (35–40). Indra asked for a description of a man who has been corrupted, who is no longer of any direct value. Bṛhaspati described the signs of a man who no longer wishes the king well: He is a backbiter who no longer displays admiration for the king, a man who has become wedded to his own ideas and preferences (40–50). Bhīṣma says Indra followed this advice and brought his enemies under his control (50).

12.105–7 (B. 104–6; C. 3847–3956) (84l-2a) The Sage Kālakavṛkṣīya's Instruction of Prince Kṣemadarśa of Kosala.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

104.1 Tell me grandfather, how does the king proceed against an enemy that is mild? Or against one that is fierce? Or against one whose partisans are many?

Bhīṣma said:

Yudhiṣṭhira, on this they recite this ancient account of a conversation between Bṛhaspati and Indra. The lord of the Gods greeted Bṛhaspati with his hands joined respectfully; Vāsava,* that slayer of enemy heroes, then came near Bṛhaspati and questioned him. "O brahmin, what is it I should do, with never a lapse, toward those that are noxious? How might I control them by some method, without completely destroying their leaders? 5 Victory by engaging armies would be the typical thing to do. What can I do so the magnificent blazing Goddess, Royal Splendor, will not abandon me?"

Then the brilliant Bṛhaspati, who was well versed in Law, Profit, and Love, and who knew all the precepts of the Laws for Kings, answered the smasher of cities. "You should never use violence when you are trying to control those who are offensive. An intemperate king might do this, or an unforgiving king; it is how children typically act.

* = Indra.

"He who seeks to slay an enemy should not declare himself to be that one's open enemy. Keeping to himself whatever anger, intensity, and impatience arise privately in his own mind, the king should treat that enemy as if he trusted him, though he does not trust him. He should never say anything but pleasant things to him; he should never do anything unkind toward him; he should desist from pointless hostilities toward him;
10 and he should avoid running his mouth° at him as well. As a clever bird-catcher makes sounds similar to the calls of the birds and brings them under his control, a clever king may lead his enemies into his control and slay them in the same way, O smasher of cities.

"Though he has conquered his enemies, he never sleeps easily, Vāsava. The one who was completely ruined wakes up again, like a fire that springs up in a heap of rubbish. But there should be no destruction once his victory is complete: Having treated the enemy solicitously and gotten control over him, he should leave the enemy alone.

"That enemy may pay no heed to the despicable thing;* he may remain unconquered in his heart; after deliberating with his exalted ministers, so rich in counsel, he may launch some attack against him† when the time is right, when that one has stumbled a bit. Or he may corrupt that one's‡
15 army with men who are trusted agents. Knowing the beginnings, middles, and ends of things, he§ should consider what is hidden from him;‖ working with what he knows from reliable sources of knowledge, he should corrupt that one's military forces by dissension and by offering inducements, mixing drugs in as well.

"But he should not arrange a mixture of clothing° with his enemies.

"After putting up with him for a long time, he may attack the enemy's forces; while he waits for the right time, he should keep tight control over his own forces, so that his enemies might relax. The king should not wipe his enemies out all at once; after he has watched patiently, his victory should be without fever. That policy# twists the point of the blade in the wound and creates a new injury.

"When the right time has come he should attack; it will never come round again for the man who wishes to slay his enemy, O lord of the Gods.
20 Should an opportunity pass by the man who has been looking for one, he will never get the chance again,° if he will do only what is Right for a given time. He should conquer his enemy's reliance on violence,° and thus win over those who are well regarded for being virtuous. He should accomplish his goals in the course of time; when something has not yet been obtained, he should not squeeze too hard.

"Having gotten rid of desire, anger, and self-exaggeration, he should be

* = his defeat. † = the king who earlier conquered him.
‡ = his conqueror's. § = the conqueror.
‖ = his potentially rebellious subject.
\# Text note: see endnote at 104.18c.

intent on seeking out the point of vulnerability of those that are noxious, O sacker of cities. O Śakra,* highest of the Gods, gentleness, punishment, laziness, negligence, and various illusions get the better of the king who is not very discriminating. Having eliminated those four vices, and having counteracted the illusions, he is then able to attack his enemies without giving it a second thought.

25 "If he can carry out a secret matter with just one man, then the king should do that; ministers retard a secret opportunity, even fritter it away amongst themselves.

"Having pronounced that something is 'Impossible,' he may then with others agree upon a plan for it.

"He should use *brahman*-force against enemies not visible, and his fourfold army against visible ones.

"In this or that matter the king should first try sowing dissension among his enemies, and now and then, at the right time, quietly use the army. He should bow down at the right time before a more powerful enemy. Always alert, he should be intent on seeking to kill his enemy when that one's guard is down. Speaking sweet words, he should treat his enemy with
30 submissive bows and gifts, and he should never make him suspicious. And he himself should always avoid those postures displayed by those who are suspicious. And he should not relax among them after he has harmed them, for those who have been humiliated stay awake.

"O best of the Gods, overlord of the immortals, there is no deed more difficult to do than governing people who have diverse ways of living; thus the king is said to be the source of the coexistence of those people of different ways of behaving. He should exert himself, making use of stratagems, favoring neither allies nor enemies.

"People despise a gentle king and they quake when he is harsh; do not lack harshness and do not lack gentleness; be harsh and be gentle.

"Like a dike in a field° that has water rushing through and flooding both sides, there is always damage from some breakdown when a king neglects his kingdom.

35 "He ought not attack many enemies at the same time: Grinding them down one by one, he should act cleverly toward the rest by means of conciliation, gifts, sowing dissension, and force, O sacker of cities. No wise king, not even one who is capable of doing it, would start against all of them at once.

"When his army is great and full with horses, elephants, chariots, infantry, and machines, and when that sixfold army° is very devoted to him; and when he judges that he has manifold superiority in comparison with his enemy, then he should openly attack the barbarians without a second thought.

* = Indra.

* "Conciliation† is not recommended, the secret teaching‡ of force is. Mildness toward enemies is never recommended, marching upon them with the army always is. Injuring crops is not recommended, nor are operations to ruin things,° nor is deliberation beyond what is normal.°

40 "Paying careful attention to towns and rural areas both, he might use different kinds of magical illusions, afflictions, and, by employing spies, even wicked deeds committed by trusted men.

"Pursuing them into their cities, kings win all the luxuries that are in those cities when they apply the policy ordained for cities in accordance with its prescriptions, O Destroyer of Bala and Vṛtra.

"Giving them§ secret riches while cutting off their incomes and setting aside his own revenues, kings put them to work in towns and rural areas with the proclamation, 'You have been ruined through your own failings.'

"Consider what things must be done° with regard to your enemies in consultation with others° who are experts in the Learned Teachings, who are well prepared and understand the ordinances of those Teachings, who have been well instructed, who are well versed in what the commentaries have to say."

Indra said:
What are the indications of someone who is corrupted,‖ O best of the brahmins? How might one recognize a corrupted man? That is the question I put to you; tell me this.
Bṛhaspati said:
45 Behind one's back he declares your vices, and he resents your virtuous qualities; when others praise your virtuous qualities, he is silent and sullen. Even in his silence you know,# even if there is no basis.** He is always inspiring trust on the one hand and biting his lip and shaking his head on the other. He is cold and aloof when he speaks to others who are warm and sincere. He expresses hostility when someone is not present, but when he sees the person he has nothing to say. He goes off by himself and

* Five almost perfectly regular upajāti stanzas in which jagatī triṣṭubhs alternate with standard triṣṭubhs.
† = *sāman*, homonym of Vedic *sāman*, "song."
‡ = *upaniṣat*, "upanishad," a teaching based on some esoteric knowledge.
§ = the king's deputies or agents, perhaps including previously conquered leaders.
‖ = *duṣṭa*, "ruined, spoiled," and so forth; here the spoiling refers to the loyalty of the retainer to his lord.
\# That is, know that he is corrupt, disloyal.
** That is, even if he gives no positive reason beyond his silence.

eats. "This has not been as I have directed!" he says: his whims must be specially observed for his sitting, his sleeping, his traveling.

He is pleased when you are pleased, and he suffers when you suffer—these are the characteristics of a friend; understand the opposite to be the characteristics of an enemy.

50 Overlord of the thirty Gods, you should recognize the traits I have described as the more significant, essential character of men who are corrupted. So now you have received a description of the corrupted man, O highest of the Gods. Perceive the essential point of the teaching correctly, O lord of the immortals.

Bhīṣma said:

* And Indra, who was dedicated to the destruction of enemies, acted in accordance with Bṛhaspati's directives. That slayer of his enemies took action for victory when the time was right, and that smasher of cities brought his enemies under his control.

(84l-2a) The Sage Kālakavṛkṣīya's Instruction of Prince Kṣemadarśa of Kosala

12.105–7 (B. 104–6; C. 3847–3956)
105 (104; 3847). Yudhiṣṭhira asks how a king should act when he lacks all resources, and Bhīṣma recites the account of The Sage Kālakavṛkṣīya's Instruction of Prince Kṣemadarśa of Kosala.

Kṣemadarśa, a prince without fortune or power, asked the sage Kālakavṛkṣīya how he should cope with his misfortune. He inquired about a superior happiness that comes from being detached from riches (1–10). Kālakavṛkṣīya gave the prince a sermon endorsing that superior happiness and emphasizing the insight that all things are impermanent. He recommended that Kṣemadarśa not hanker for what really cannot be owned by anyone (10–20). Kṣemadarśa agreed with the overall perspective, and the sage praised his keen understanding (25). The sage recommended the prince not be envious of others who prosper even when he does not (30). Kālakavṛkṣīya

* A perfectly regular, classical, jagatī triṣṭubh.

then chided the prince for not renouncing completely and thoroughly, as some men do, and then he criticized men who live for wealth. Again he exhorted the prince to renounce, but to avoid the "Way of the Skull" (30–45). He recommended a solitary life of thorough self-restraint in the forest (45–50).
106 (105; 3903). The sage Kālakavṛkṣīya continued instructing prince Kṣemadarśa of Kosala. He suggested that if Kṣemadarśa had any initiative left, he might regain his kingdom by becoming a trusted servant of his enemy, the king of Videha (1). Having gained a position of trust and power (5), he should then use it bring his enemy down by setting those in the kingdom against each other, or by betraying the king's army to the enemy, or by addicting the king to luxuries, causing him to drain his treasury, encouraging the brahmins to pester him for rituals and grants, praising fate and minimizing human exertion, getting him under the influence of a renouncer-preceptor, feeding him or his men and animals drugs, and so forth. But it takes "a real man" to do these things (10–20).
107 (106; 3929). The prince rejected the idea, and the sage praised him. The sage then proposed to get Videha to take Kṣemadarśa as an advisor (1–5). The sage summoned Videha to his home, vouched for the prince's honesty, and strongly recommended the king take the prince as his minister. Kālakavṛkṣīya acknowledged that the prince might make war against him on the battlefield, but otherwise he would be amenable to the king's control. Videha agreed and accepted his defeated enemy as his minister (5–25). Kṣemadarśa returned to his home, and Videha soon visited him there and received the former's daughter. This teaches the highest Law of kṣatriyas: Both victory and defeat must be endured (25).

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

105.1 How should a virtuous king who wants happiness behave when he has failed to gain riches, has been opposed by his ministers, is destitute of treasury, and deprived of his army?

Bhīṣma said:

On this there is recited the account of Kṣemadarśin. I will tell you all of it. Pay attention, Yudhiṣṭhira. We have heard that the sage Kālakavṛkṣīya came to Kṣemadarśa,* a prince whose power had earlier dwindled away. Being in dire distress, the king approached that one and questioned him.

* See Chapter 12.83 for the account of another encounter between this king and this sage.

"Brahmin, what should a man such as myself, who is entitled to riches,
5 do when he strives over and over but fails to get a kingdom? Excellency, tell me what there is for me besides my dying or becoming a thief, besides my taking refuge with my enemies or taking up some pathetic way of life. Someone afflicted with a malady, whether it be psychological or something else, should have a wise and learned man like yourself for refuge.

"A man enjoys happiness when he becomes radically disaffected, after he has restricted his desires and abandoned delight and sorrow, after he has acquired riches not made up of pleasure. I mourn for those whose happiness depends upon riches. My many riches have disappeared as if they had come to me in a dream. We cannot dismiss completely those who do the extremely difficult deed of letting go of vast riches, even if they are
10 not strictly observant men.* Brahmin, teach me what other happiness there is here, now that I have ended up in this condition, am depressed and tormented, and deprived of Royal Splendor."

When the wise prince of Kosala had said this to him, the illustrious sage Kālakavṛkṣīya responded. "This understanding which you have already come to must be put into practice. All there is here is transient, as am I and what is mine. Whatever you think to exist, realize that none of it does exist. Thus a wise man is not troubled even when he arrives in a miserable condition of distress. Whatever has come to be and whatever will come to be will certainly come to an end. When you have understood what needs to be understood in this way, you will get free of your evil deeds.

15 "Whatever there was in an earlier aggregation—and whatever there was in any other before that—none of it exists now, nor of that other. How could anyone be anxious after he has understood this? Having existed, this ceases to be; not having existed, this comes to be. Grieving is good for nothing;° why would a man grieve?

"Where is your father now, king? Where is your grandfather now? You do not see them now, and they do not see you. Taking note of your own impermanence, why do you grieve for them? Analyze this with your Higher Mind. Certainly you are going to die. I and you, king, and your
20 enemies and allies will all die, necessarily. Everything dies. Whether they are twenty or thirty years old, all humans who are here now will die before a hundred years.

"If a man is separated from great wealth, he would do himself a favor were he to think, 'It was not really mine.'

> † "What still lies in the future he should regard as, 'Not mine;'
> what has passed beyond him he should regard as, 'Not mine.'
> Those who think, 'Fate is very powerful,' are the wise ones;

* Probably a reference to non-Vedic renouncers such as Śākyamuni and Mahāvīra.
† One somewhat irregular triṣṭubh stanza.

they say that is the position of those who are strictly
observant.*

"People without riches survive; they even govern kingdoms—fully endowed with insight and energetic initiative, these people are just as good as, or even higher than you. They do not grieve as you do, so you should not grieve either. Why are you not better than they are? Or even equal to them in insight and initiative?"

The prince said:

25 I think it is an accident that this kingdom was mine. All that is here is taken away by vast Time, brahmin. O you whose wealth is your ascetic merit, I foresee the result that will come of its being snatched away like this, as if by a river—that I live on whatever comes my way.

The sage said:

Because you have come to this accurate conclusion, prince of Kosala, you do not grieve for what is in the future, or what is past. Be this way with regard to all things. Wish for things that are attainable, never for those that are unattainable. Experiencing those things that are here right now, do not grieve for what has not come. If you concern yourself only with what is at hand or what comes your way,° then, prince of Kosala, you will enjoy yourself. Maybe now that your fundamental nature has been cleansed you will not grieve, even though deprived of Royal Splendor.

30 A stupid man whose good fortune has declined is disgruntled at what he has now, and he always blames the Creator first, because of what he had before. Then he regards other people blessed with Splendor to be unworthy. For these reasons his misery recurs, and all the worse. King, some are highly accomplished at making overly subtle distinctions because of their jealousy, and they take great pride in being "A Man."° O wise lord of Kosala, be not envious like this. Put up with the Splendor others have, even if you have none. Sophisticated people enjoy Lady Lakṣmī even when she is with someone else. The Goddess Splendor slips away from hateful people and goes over to the virtuous.

Men doing something Good and Meritorious, heroes who truly know the Law of giving things up, give up Splendor, and their sons and grandsons,
35 and even their own selves, after seeing that much crumbles away after realizing one's desires for acquisition. Similarly, others completely let go of it all,† regarding it as impossibly difficult to get. But you, who give the appearance of being wise, suffer grievously, wishing for things you should not wish for, that are untoward and bode ill. As you try to become familiar with this idea, abandon those things that are wrong though they seem good, as well as those things that are good but seem wrong.

For some, the destruction of their riches is for the good. Another looks

* = pious brahmins and those who heed them.
† = the objects of acquisitiveness.

upon Splendor and believes it means endless happiness; and while he is enjoying himself with the Goddess Splendor, thinking there is nothing better, while he is preoccupied with her this way, his initiative disappears.
40 O prince of Kosala, when something beloved that has been acquired after one takes great trouble disappears, then that one becomes disaffected from the thing; he is a man whose forward momentum has been shattered.

Some illustrious and well-born men devote themselves to Goodness; seeking their happiness in what is beyond, they become disaffected from this worldly realm. But some men are consumed by their greed for wealth, and they commit suicide; these men think there is no other point to life than wealth. Look at the wretchedness of their lives! Look at the lack of understanding of those who, from delusion, have given themselves over to the thirst for riches when life is so precarious. Who would waste his mind on accumulations that are going to end up gone, on life that is going to end
45 in death, on connections that are going to end in separation? King, either the wealth abandons the man, or the man abandons the wealth. It leaves him, whether he wants it to or not; what man who knows anything would brood over that? The friends and the riches of others disappear too. Look with understanding upon the predicament of human beings in general, as well as on your own. Restrain, hold, concentrate° your senses, your mind, your voice!

A courageous man like you who is satisfied with wisdom does not grieve for those attainable things that are denied him, or for things that are too difficult to get, or harmful, or despised, or that are mere fantasies, or that are outrageous, or which simply will not be. Seeking only a little, not fickle, gentle, self-controlled, very firmly committed, dedicated to celibacy, a man like you is not deluded.

But you ought not try to live by the contemptible Skull Way of Begging;* that is a cruel way of life, very wicked, miserable, and favored only by vile men.

50 Live by yourself in the great forest, subsisting upon roots and fruits, observing silence, completely restraining yourself, imbued with kindness toward all beings. When the sage lives alone happily in the forest and is satisfied with just a little, his life is similar to that of the old elephant with tusks as long as the drawbars of a wagon. Like a big lake that was all churned up, he becomes calm and placid within himself. I see this as absolute happiness for the one who goes this way.

When Splendor is not a possibility, when one is bereft of associates and so forth, when fate has been unrelentingly hard, what, sir, do you think would be better?

The sage said:

106.1 Here, kṣatriya,° I'll tell you a policy for getting your kingdom back, in case you should find any manly initiative within yourself. And if you are

* Refers to a Śaivite sect of ascetics.

capable of executing this policy, you will be doing a real deed! Listen to every bit of what I shall carefully tell you. If you perform this deed, you will gain tremendous riches, you will gain a kingdom or the control of a kingdom,° or even, once again, the Great Goddess Royal Splendor. If this pleases you, king, say so once again, and I will tell it to you.

The prince said:

Blessed one, declare this policy. I am ready for it, lord. My meeting with you today must not be vain!

The sage said:

5 Dispense with arrogance, conceit, anger, joy, and fear and pay homage to your enemy, falling down before him with your hands folded in respect. Propitiate him in deed with the utmost sincerity. The king of Videha, who is true to his agreements, ought then give you employment. You will enter his favor and become a respected authority for everyone. Thus you will gain companions who are hardy, free of vices, and honest.

He who works at his own duties, who is thoroughly restrained and has his senses under control, pleases his subjects and raises himself up.

After you have been treated hospitably by that resolute man possessed of Royal Splendor; after you have come into great favor and become a 10 respected authority for everyone; having then acquired the power of allies, having contributed well-considered counsel, having split your enemies apart by means of internal measures, smash the *bilva* with a *bilva.*° Or having made a pact with his enemies, have his army wiped out.

You should make your enemy dependent on nice things that are not immediately available—women, clothes, couches, sitting-platforms, vehicles, and expensive houses, birds, animals, juices, fragrances, and fruits—so that he might ruin himself. If you are resisted, or should he be indifferent, you must not make him your enemy openly, if you really want to control him.

"Live in the bosom of your worst enemy, yourself esteemed a wise man!
Furnish the least of your allies with idle extravagances!"

15 Set him to work on his great, extremely difficult projects, such as capturing the water of rivers and damming them up. Make sure he is opposed by powerful foes. Drain his treasury with the enjoyment of luxuries—expensive gardens, couches, and thrones. Make sure that accounts praising sacrificial rites and making grants are recounted to him in the presence of brahmins. The brahmins will be kind to you, and they will go after him like wolves. For example: "The man of pious habits is certain to gain the supreme course." And "The king gains the holiest position in heaven." O prince of Kosala, he will go under the control of his enemies when his treasury is exhausted.

When a king is attached to both Lawful and Unlawful Deeds, his enemies will congratulate whoever might sever the base of his riches and power.

20 Find fault with his merely human efforts, and describe fate for him in detail; without a doubt the man who thinks fate is most important goes to ruin very quickly. Have him perform the "All-Conquering" sacrificial rite and make sure he is relieved of all he owns by that rite. Then, when his ends have not been realized, and he is sorely tormented, he must go to some great man. Suggest for him some baldy who knows the Law of giving things up, and maybe he will strive for renunciation, or betake himself to that which is free of all ill. Harm him by a perfectly concocted application of drugs that would destroy any enemy. Injure his elephants, horses, and men with various confections. These and many other devices of fraud have been well researched, and they can be carried out, prince, by a tough-minded man who is not a sissy.

The prince said:

107.1 I do not want to live by base dishonesty, nor by fraud, brahmin. I would not want any riches that involved doing Wrong, not even if they were stupendous. Up till now, blessed one, I have avoided anything that might make one doubt me, so that everything would be safe for me. I have sought to live in this world by the Law of kindness. I am not able to do this, it does not suit me.

The sage said:

You are suitable by what you say, kṣatriya! You are suitable by nature 5 and by understanding, O you of marvelous outlook! I will exert myself for the sake of both of you. I will make a bond between you and him that will be everlasting, that will never disappear. Who would not make a minister of someone like you, who was born in a good family, who is very learned and kind, and an expert in the guidance of kingdoms? You have met high catastrophe and left your kingdom, yet you, kṣatriya, wish to live by a kindly way of life! Son, the king of Videha, who is true to his agreements, is going to come to my house. As I will enjoin this upon him, he will certainly do it.

Bhīṣma said:

Then the sage summoned the king of Videha and said to him, "This man was born in a family of kings, and he is an intimate acquaintance of 10 mine. I have examined him in every respect, and I see nothing crooked in him. His soul is clean like the surface of a mirror, like the orb of an autumn moon. You must ally yourself with him. Trust in him as you would in me. O slayer of your enemies, you cannot govern your kingdom without a minister. A minister should be a real heroic warrior, and he should be highly intelligent too. These two things are a source of danger for a king, but look instead to the functioning of your kingdom. Nowhere in the society of those devoted to Law is there another opportunity like this one. This prince has a well-formed mind; he has followed the path of the strictly

observant; he is led by Law, and if he is well received and well treated by you, he will seize many throngs of your enemies.

"If he should fight against you,° trying to defeat you in battle in the track of his father and grandfather, that is the proper work of a kṣatriya, 15 and you should fight against him, firmly committed to winning victory. But if neither of you has made war, he remains in your control by my command, O king of Videha.

"Heed what is Right, forsaking Wrong that is also untimely. You ought never abandon your Rightful Duty from either love or hate. Victory is not permanent, son, nor is defeat permanent. So, have your enemy put to use and be used by him. You should envision both victory and defeat for yourself. Those who leave no remnant fear the leaving of no remnant."

After that bull among brahmins had said this to him, the king made this reply after politely paying his respects to that one deserving of respect and 20 after asking leave to speak. "As you say, man of great wisdom. As you say, man of great learning. As you say, man who wants what is best. Whatever is proper for the both of us. I have said, 'Yes,' and so I will do this. It is the very highest and best thing to do, I have no doubt of it."

So the king of Videha summoned the prince of Kosala and said to him, "I conquered you with my army in accordance with Law and policy. But now you have conquered me with the good attributes of your soul, most excellent of kings. You, sir, must live like a conquered man, but without despising yourself. I do not have a low opinion of your intellect, and I do not have a low opinion of your manly energy. But neither do I have a low 25 opinion of 'I win'; you, sir, must live as a conquered man. King, you shall travel from my home to your own home with proper honors."

The two of them then paid their respects to the brahmin and went to their homes, each trusting the other.

But soon afterward the king of Videha entered the home of the prince of Kosala. That one paid him respect in return with the water for guests, the water to wash his feet, and a honey-mix. He then gave him his daughter and various gems.

This is the highest Law of kings—victory and defeat both must be endured.

(84) The Laws for Kings (Continued)

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

108.1 O scorcher of your enemies, this easy linking of verses in the form of instructions has exactly recounted for brahmins, kṣatriyas, vaiśyas, and

śūdras their Lawful Duties, the forms of their behavior, their livelihoods, and the means and benefits of their livelihoods; also the behavior of kings, the treasury, and the great feat of generating produce for the treasury, fostering the good qualities of one's ministers, causing one's subjects to prosper, the rule of strength with regard to the six measures of foreign policy, the policy for using the army; recognizing the man who is corrupted, the characteristics of the man who is not corrupted; the multitude of detailed characterizations of those who are average, those who are deficient, and those who are superior; how the king who is waxing greater should remain so; how to keep a neutral king contented; 5 and the way a destitute king is supported. Similarly, Bhārata, you have declared the way the king seeking conquest should behave. Now, O best of wise men, I want to hear about the working of the tribal federations:* How do the tribal federations prosper, Bhārata, how do they avoid breaking up, how do they seek to conquer their enemies, and how do they gain allies? Tribal federations are observed to disappear completely because their members break apart. In my judgment, keeping counsels secret is the trouble for many of them. O scorcher of your foes, I want to hear everything about how these may avoid breaking up. Tell me this, king.

Bhīṣma said:

10 Greed and indignant anger are the two things that ignite hostility in tribal federations, in clans, and among the kings,† king. One man opts for greed, and indignant anger comes immediately from that. These two‡ entail wasting away until there is nothing left,° and each of them depends upon what the other produces.

Countries shrivel each other up with devices that inspire fear and cause wasting away until there is nothing left—by spies, secret plans, military forces, and by seizures and conciliation, giving gifts, and sowing dissension.

> In this connection, tribal federations that operate as aggregate groups are split apart by gifts given. Split apart, they become demoralized, and then everyone goes under the control of the enemy out of fear. Tribal federations disappear completely because they dissolve—those that have split off are easily seduced by enemies. Therefore, tribal federations should always devote themselves to the bonds within the group 15 aggregation. Indeed, their riches result from individual exertions amplified by the power of the aggregate group.° Outsiders make overtures of good will toward those who live in group aggregations.
>
> Praising those in the group that are mature in knowledge, attentive to each other, never repudiating their sense of unity, they prosper happily in every way.

* Oligarchic nations that have no kings; see endnote at 108.6.
† = nations with kingly lineages.
‡ = greed and anger.

The best tribal federations thrive by establishing the most scrupulously Just judicial procedures and living exactly in accordance with their judgments.

The best tribal federations thrive when they are devoted to discipline, punishing even their sons and their brothers, showing favor to those who are well disciplined.

Tribal federations thrive in every way when they are always engaged in the commissioning of spies and secret plans, and in making additions to the treasury, O strong-armed man.

20 Tribal federations thrive, king, when they are always careful to honor their wise members, their heroic warriors, and those men who consistently apply their own exertions to their federations' works.

Heroic warriors who are substantially wealthy, who are knowledgeable about weapons, who are experts in the Learned Teachings, rescue tribal federations that are paralyzed amidst dire misfortunes. Anger, dissension, fear, punishment, starvation, imprisonment, and executions lead tribal federations immediately into the power of the enemy, most excellent of the Bharatas. Therefore, the principal members of a tribal federation should be held in high esteem from the chiefs on down. Most of the world's affairs depend upon them, king.

Secret plans should be restricted only to the chiefs, and knowledge of spies too, O you who shrivel up your foes; not all members of tribal 25 federations should hear the secret plans, Bhārata. The principal men of the tribal federation should meet and work together for the welfare of the federation. When a particular tribal federation is not of one mind, or is split up in some other way, its projects lapse and become pointless.

When the members of a federation are alienated from each other, when each is relying upon his own capabilities, those men need to be quickly recaptured by the wiser men, starting with the chiefs. When quarrels that erupt in clans are overlooked by the elders of the clans, king, they create a process that effects the complete alienation of the tribe from the federation.°

One should guard against dangers internal to the group; it is easier to guard against external dangers. Once a danger has arisen within the group, it can cut through the root of the group in an instant. A sign of a group's demise is when its members do not speak to each other because of anger or greed from who knows what, or out of some confusion arising 30 naturally. All the members resemble each other by their race, and likewise they resemble each other by their clan—but not in courage, nor intelligence, nor beauty, nor wealth.

Tribal federations are made to bow down to their enemies because they have split up, or because there has been neglect. Therefore, they say that aggregation in the group is the great refuge of tribal federations.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

109.1 The way of Law is vast and has many different branches, Bhārata! Is one of these Laws held to be the single one that should most be performed in this world? Of all the Laws, which duty do you think is the most important for a person's gaining Merit for this world and the next?

Bhīṣma said:

I have the greatest regard for honoring one's mother and father, and one's teachers. A man who sees to that enjoys heavenly worlds and great glory. Yudhiṣṭhira, son, any deed that these agree upon must be done, after they have been well honored, whether it is Lawful or opposed to 5 Law. And one may not propose some other deed as Law* without their consent—that on which they agree is Law; that is the settled conclusion.

These three are the three worlds, they are the three religious Patterns of Life, the three Vedas, the three fires of the sacrificial rite. Tradition holds the father to be the "Head of Household Fire,"° the mother the "Southern Fire," and the teacher is the "Offering Fire." This trio of fires is what is most important. You will win the three worlds if you do not neglect these three. You will move across this world by proper behavior toward your father; similarly, you will move across the further world by proper behavior toward your mother; you will move across the world of Brahmā by proper behavior toward your teacher—always. Behave perfectly in these three worlds, Bhārata, and you will gain glory and Merit that will yield 10 tremendous benefits. Blessings upon you! One should never show them up, nor out-eat them, nor shame them. One should always attend to their needs—that is the highest good deed. And thus you will gain fame, merit, glory, and heavenly worlds, O lord of peoples.

"All the worlds that are respected belong to him who respects these three. But he who does not respect these finds that all his actions are fruitless. Scorcher of your enemies, the man who never honors these three important people has neither this world nor the next one. His glory shines neither in this world nor the next one, and there is no other blessing promised him in the next world either."

I pass everything over to them solemnly,° and it becomes mine a hundred times over, a thousand times over. So the three worlds shine brilliantly for me, Yudhiṣṭhira.

15 One man who teaches right behavior by example surpasses ten learned scholars of the Veda;° one teacher surpasses ten men who teach by example; one's father surpasses ten teachers; but one mother surpasses ten fathers, or even the entire earth, by her importance—there is no authority equal to the mother.

(In my judgment the teacher is more important than father and mother.)

* = some deed other than what they together agree upon.

The mother and the father are both concerned with the child at its birth, the two of them, Bhārata, father and mother, send forth the body.

(The birth which is given by the teacher's instruction is divine, never decays with age, never dies.)

One's mother must never be killed, nor one's father, not even if they do wrong. Having done wrong,° the child does not taint the parents, and they do not taint him. The Gods and the seers are aware of those who strive to do what is Right.

> * (I regard him to be a boy's father and mother, he who surrounds a boy's ears with the truth,° as he declares the truth to him, as he presents to him a nectar of undying words. Knowing what that one has done, one should never harm him.
>
> (When pupils have learned from a teacher but show him no respect, neither in thought nor in deed, not even when he is present, they must then be corrected by other teachers, and then they owe respect to those teachers too.)

So he who wants to do the ancient Law must honor his parents and teachers, must share what he has with them, must worship them.

(He who pleases his fathers pleases his grandfathers too.† He who pleases his mother also pays respect to the earth. When one pleases his teacher of the Veda, he would also pay respect to the *brahman*. Thus a teacher is more worthy of respect than one's mother or one's father.

(The seers and the Gods are pleased along with the fathers. By no mannerism whatsoever shall a teacher be shown contempt; nor one's mother, nor one's father, for they are similar to the teacher. These never deserve contempt; nor do they taint him.‡ The Gods and the seers are aware of the hospitable treatment of teachers.)

> § Anyone who harms his teacher, his father, or his mother in thought or in deed gets evil worse than that of abortion; there is none in the world more wicked than he.

We have never heard of any expiation for one who harms a friend, for one who is ungrateful, for one who slays a woman, or for an informer.

* Two irregular, Vedic-style triṣṭubh stanzas.
† Text note: see endnote at 109.22.
‡ Their wrong deeds do not stain their children or disciples.
§ An irregular, Vedic-style triṣṭubh stanza with one hypermetric verse (b).

> * All of this has been issued as a "super-teaching" of what a person must do here in this world. This is the best thing to do; there is nothing more excellent than it. It has been declared after perusing all the Laws.

(84m) Discerning Reality behind Surface Appearances in Difficult Circumstances

12.110–15 (B. 109–14; C. 4023–4230)

110 (109; 4023). Yudhiṣṭhira notes that truth and falsehood both pervade the world, and he asks about their relation to what is Right. He further asks when is it permissible to speak what is false. Bhīṣma praises truth, but immediately acknowledges the subtlety that sometimes right demands untrue statements (1–5). Discussion of what is Right and Lawful (it is whatever does no harm, or whatever "holds," that is, preserves, creatures) (10). Discussion of the story of Kauśika, whose naive truth-telling enabled villains to murder innocent people. Lying is sometimes the right thing to do (10–15). Various other dicta on the subject of truth-telling: Some allow deliberate falsehood, others insist upon truthfulness (15). The final theme condemns evil hypocrites (false brahmins) who make a living from the semblance of performing their proper Lawful Duties: No one should have anything to do with them, and they can be killed with impunity (20–25).

111 (110; 4053). Yudhiṣṭhira asks how one gets past the hard spots in life, and Bhīṣma recommends a wide-ranging series of attitudes and habits for brahmins, rulers, and men in general (1–20). Praise of Nārāyaṇa and Kṛṣṇa is woven into this theme (20–25).

112 (111; 4083). Yudhiṣṭhira notes that appearances can be misleading in judging men. Bhīṣma responds with the Dialogue of a Tiger and a Jackal. *A wicked king became a highly virtuous jackal in his next life, dedicated to harmlessness, living on fallen fruit, eschewing meat even when other jackals brought it to him. When his fellow jackals*

* An irregular, Vedic-style triṣṭubh.

argued it was his nature to eat flesh, he countered that one's inner being determines one's actions rather than one's birth and circumstances. He condemned the jackal way of life as vile (1–15). The king of beasts, a tiger, judged that the jackal was honest and learned, and he wanted the jackal to be his minister. The jackal made a long speech praising the tiger, avowing his own disinterest in the rewards of the position proffered him, suggesting that neither the king nor his current ministers would really be pleased with him, and praising the independent life he now enjoyed (15–30). He then accepted the king's offer with several stipulations, including that he would not consult with the king's other advisors, that the king and he would meet alone, that the king would always follow his advice, and that the king would never inflict punishment when angered by the jackal's words (30–35). The tiger agreed, and the jackal became his favored minister. The jackal interfered with the customary liberties of the tiger's existing ministers, so these framed him for stealing the king's specially prepared meat. The king ordered the jackal executed (40–50). The king's mother then alleged to the king that the jackal had been framed, and she pointed to the jackal's virtues as proof of his innocence (55–65). Then an honest minister from among the former ministers admitted the plot to the king, and the king freed the jackal and welcomed him back into the royal service. But the jackal was determined to perform the prāya *fast to the death (65). He excoriated the king for not trusting him and reminded the king at length that it was no longer possible for them to trust each other (70–80). He returned to the forest, fasted to death, and went to heaven (85).*

113 (112; 4173). Yudhiṣṭhira asks what a king should do to be happy, and Bhīṣma tells him not to act like the camel who was lazy. A camel performed great asceticism, and Brahmā granted his wish to have a neck a hundred yojanas *long to make grazing very easy. Once, during a storm, he wedged his head into a cave and, when he could not extract it, a pair of hungry jackals ate it, thus killing him (1–15). Bhīṣma praises industry and intelligence, and a few other prudential virtues of kings (15–20).*

114 (113; 4196). Yudhiṣṭhira asks how a weak king can stand against a mighty one and Bhīṣma relates The Dialogue of the Ocean and the Rivers. *The ocean asked the rivers, his wives, why they were able to knock down large trees but not puny reeds. Gaṅgā explained that the reeds, unlike the trees, understood time and season and bent down when the current ran against them and bent back up when the current was gone. So kings should know the strengths and weakness of themselves and their enemies and bend when necessary (1–10).*

115 (114; 4210). Yudhiṣṭhira asks how a mild and knowing man should act when abused in public by a fool. Bhīṣma describes colorfully some of the ways ignorant men abuse their betters and counsels patience and forbearance. He argues specifically that their words alone are harmless, but advises simply avoiding the trouble of their company and the risk of their violence (1–20).

110.1 *Yudhiṣṭhira said:*

Bhārata,° how can a man who desires to stay Virtuous go on? Learned man, bull of the Bharatas, tell me this as I make this inquiry. Truth and falsehood both pervade all realms. What might a man who is resolved to do what is Right do with regard to these two? What is truth, anyway? And what falsehood? And what is everlastingly Right? At what times should one speak what is true? And when might he speak what is false?

Bhīṣma said:

Speaking the truth is right; there is nothing that is higher than the truth.° I will tell you, Bhārata, the thing most difficult to understand in the whole world. It would be that the truth should not be spoken and that falsehood should be spoken, where falsehood would be truth, or truth falsehood. Someone simple is dumbfounded in that circumstance where truth is not fixed. After coming to a considered discrimination between truth and falsehood, one becomes a real knower of Right. (5)

Now even an ignoble man of defective understanding and exceptional cruelty may gain a tremendous blessing, as did Balāka° after killing the blind beast. What is the marvel in that? On the other hand a fool who wants to do only Right, Lawful deeds, but who does not really know what is Right, might acquire tremendous evil, as did Kauśika° on the Gaṅgā. This question is one of those where it is very difficult to say what is Right and Lawful. What is Right in these cases is difficult to specify; it is determined by reasoning. (10)

What is Right and Lawful was declared for the purpose of augmenting beings, so the Right and Lawful would be whatever involves doing no harm to beings; that is the settled conclusion.

They say the Right and Lawful* is from its "holding."† Creatures are "held apart" by the Right and Lawful.‡ "So the Right and Lawful is whatever involves 'holding' ";§ that is the settled conclusion.

* = *dharma.*

† = *dhāraṇa;* both words from the same verb root: √*dhṛ*.

‡ = *dharmeṇa vidhṛtāḥ prajāḥ.*

§ The connotations of "holding" here are "preserving, keeping, maintaining."

Some people say what is Right and Lawful is "the Law taught in Holy Learning," but others say, "No." We have no trouble with that,* for not everything has been prescribed. When those robbers wrongly sought that money in that place, Kauśika should not have explained to them what they asked.° It's certain that that is what would have been the Right and Lawful thing to do there.

"If escape is possible° by your not singing your song, then you should not let out the smallest note. But if your not singing would arouse suspicion, then you absolutely have to sing away."

15 My considered judgment is that in those circumstances speaking a falsehood is better than speaking the truth, even if one swears an oath, since someone is escaping the clutches of evil men. No money whatsoever should be given to evil men, even if one is able to do so;† for money given to them may be used to oppress the one who gives it. It would be better to rob the robbers,° even with injury to one's own body.

Those who are witnesses to some matter should speak to establish the definite truth;° any who fail to say what should be said are liars.

What one is obliged to say regarding someone's life passing away, or regarding a marriage, may be a lie; also for the preserving of wealth, and in order to cause others to do what is Right and Lawful (but if he lies expecting to gain some of their Merit, he would be a debased Merit-beggar).

But when someone has promised he will give something and then wants to put it off, he is made to give it by force. Anyone who fails to live up to a Lawful agreement has committed a Wrong.

20 A hypocrite who has rejected his particular Lawful Duties may still try to make a living from them‡—he is an evil man living upon dishonesty, and he should be cut down by any means.

The one aim of all evil people in this world is "Riches"; no one should put up with them, no one should eat with them, they are going to hell because of their dishonesty. Alienated from Gods and men, it is as if they were dead already; for them death is more miserable because their riches are taken from them.

"He should be duly instructed, 'What is Right and Lawful would surely please you.'"

No, the fact is there is no Right for evil men. Should anyone kill someone who has gone this way, he is not stained with any evil. He simply kills one who had already been slain by his own deeds—already slain he is slain.

25 Anyone who contracts with these men whose minds have been slain lives

* Evidently, "that latter position" (i.e., "No").
† And even if lying is required to keep it from them.
‡ = the *svadharma* he has actually abandoned; the *svadharma* of brahmins is particularly susceptible to such duplicity.

by villainy like the crow and the vulture. Later, after release from their bodies, they will live in those existences.

* However any man acts toward another, that is how the other should act toward him: That is Right. One who lives by means of deceit should be treated with deceit, while one who does good should be met with good.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

111.1 When people are tormented by these conditions and those that arise from this and that, what can they use to get past the hard spots? Tell me that, grandfather.

Bhīṣma said:

Brahmins who live in the religious Life-Patterns that have been prescribed and in the way they have been prescribed, men who are completely restrained—they get past the hard spots.

They who whisper no lies, who live a life constrained all round, who limit the objects their senses know—they get past the hard spots.

They who are never resentful, who always make their guests stay over; who habitually perform their daily recitations of the Veda—they get past the hard spots.

5 They who know well what is Right and Lawful, who follow the way of life their mother and father did, and eschew sleeping during the day—they get past the hard spots.

They who have sex only with their own wives (who are women of upright comportment) and only at the time of their seasons of fertility; strictly pious men dedicated to the performance of the Agnihotra sacrifice†—they get past the hard spots.

Rulers pervaded with impassioning Energy, who do not take riches merely from greed, who protect their realms well—they get past the hard spots.

Heroic warriors who let go of their fear of death and Lawfully seek victory in battles—they get past the hard spots.

Men who never do wrong in thought, word, or deed; who impose the rod of punishment on their subjects—they get past the hard spots.

10 Men who speak truths in this world, even when the end of life is at hand; who have become the standards of behavior for people—they get past the hard spots.

* One proto-śālinī triṣṭubh stanza. † Every sunrise and sunset.

Those brahmins who make no studies of matters that should not be studied; who are constantly engaged in asceticism and have great ascetic merit—they get past the hard spots.

Men whose deeds never have tricky ends, whose words are always pleasant and true, whose riches are always righteous riches—they get past the hard spots.

Men who heat up the ascetic heat, who were celibate in their youth, who have completed vows for the Vedas or special learning—they get past the hard spots.

Men who have quelled the Attribute of Energy within themselves, who have quelled the Attribute of Darkness within themselves, exalted men who abide within the Real—they get past the hard spots.

15 Men whom no one fears and who have no fear of anyone; who hold the world to be the same as themselves—they get past the hard spots.

Men who are bulls among strictly observant men, who are not pained by the splendid riches of others, who have desisted from the common fare—they get past the hard spots.

Men who worship all the Gods and obey all the Laws, who are zealously faithful and self-controlled—they get past the hard spots.

Men who do not seek honor but honor others instead, and who are self-effacing when they are being honored—they get past the hard spots.

Men in quest of progeny who perform the memorial rites for their departed ancestors on the right lunar days month after month, their minds completely cleansed—they get past the hard spots.

20 Men who never fly into rages, who instead pacify those that are enraged; who never get angry with their servants—they get past the hard spots.

Men who have avoided honey,° meat, and intoxicating drink unfailingly, from the day of their birth—they get past the hard spots.

Men who eat only to keep going, who have sex only to continue the lineage, who speak only to declare the truth—they get past the hard spots.

Men who are devoted to Nārāyaṇa, the Lord of all beings, the origin and end of the universe—they get past the hard spots.

25 The Unfallen One,* whose eyes are red lotuses, who wears a yellow robe and has burly arms; your friend, brother, ally, and affine; who wraps

* = Kṛṣṇa.

around all these worlds like a skin, the favoring lord, whose being is incomprehensible; Govinda, the Highest Person, who is committed to Jiṣṇu's* welfare and pleasure, O bull among men, he is impossible for you to withstand, king; he is Vaikuṇṭha, the Highest Person.

Those who rely upon Narāyāṇa, Hari, with devotion—these get past the hard spots, I have no doubt of it.

Those that read this "Getting Past the Hard Spots," and those who read it out to others and have it read to brahmins—they get past the hard spots.

So I have recited this instruction on things to be done, O you who are blameless; with it a man might cross the hard spots in this world and the next.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

112.1 There are disagreeable men who seem complaisant and men who are complaisant who seem disagreeable. How do we know such men, grandpa?

Bhīṣma said:

On this they recite this ancient account of a conversation between a tiger and a jackal. Pay attention to this, Yudhiṣṭhira. Long ago, in the city of Purikā that shone with Royal Splendor, Paurika was king. He was the lowest of men, a cruel man who took pleasure in harming others. But when his life had run out he traveled an awful course and ended up as a 5 jackal, for he had been ruined by his prior deeds. Recollecting his earlier life, he arrived at supreme disaffection.° He would not eat meat, not even when others brought some to him. Doing no harm to any creatures, speaking the truth, his behavior absolutely rigid, he took food as he liked in the form of fallen fruit.

This jackal's den was in a cremation ground, and this was agreeable to him; because he favored it as the place of his birth, no other dwelling suited him. The others of his kind could not stand this jackal's being so clean, and they tried to shake his thinking with respectful suggestions. "You are trying to be clean while you live in this horrific grove of our ancestors! This is a 10 contradiction, since you are a flesh-eater. So be like us. We will bring you food. Forget about your cleanliness and eat it, since it is your food."

He answered them quite deliberately with sweet and courteous words that offered reasons with no trace of harshness. "Birth is not the standard for me; one's race is made from one's character. Now I am trying for the deed that will spread my glory far and wide. Though my den is in a cremation ground, note how perfectly focused I am. One's inner being sends forth one's actions; a hermitage is not an indication of Meritorious Behavior. One can kill a brahmin while living in a hermitage, and one who

* = Arjuna's.

does not live in a hermitage can make a gift of a cow: Would the first not be a sin? Would the gift be given in vain? You good fellows delight in nothing but eating voraciously. All mixed up, you don't see the faults there are in this enslavement. I do not approve of this way of life for it is followed without any conscious reflection, and since it leads away from the goal, it is reprehensible and vile; it is favored neither in this world nor in the next."

A tiger famous for his prowess judged this jackal to be honest and wise. This tiger himself paid the jackal homage that was appropriate to his own kind, and then he elevated the jackal to the status of minister. "Kind sir, I understand your outward appearance. Go to work with me. An abundance of coveted privileges and benefits shall be granted to you exclusively.° We are famous for being 'fierce.' Now, because of you, sir, we may advertise ourselves the gentle killers. It will go better."

The jackal showed respect for this speech by the exalted king of the beasts, and then, bowing a bit, he made this courteous response. "King of beasts, the speech you've made to me is fitting, since you are trying to recruit assistants who are honest and well-versed in both Law and Profit. This vastness cannot be ruled without a minister, nor with a corrupt minister, who may be hostile to your very person, mighty one. You must strive to get assistants who are devoted to you and have no attachments of their own; who do not simply echo each other, who have a winning attitude, and who have no obsessions; men who have left deceit behind, who are wise and clever, and committed to fostering welfare. You should honor such illustrious men as you do your teachers and your parents.

"But, lord of beasts, there is nothing that pleases me besides my contentment. I do not wish for comfortable privileges, nor for lordly power deriving from yours. My character will not fit with the retainers you already have, and my annoying customs will alienate you. You are praiseworthy, since others depend upon you, including some who are brilliant. You are sophisticated and illustrious, and you are not cruel, not even toward those that are evil. Far-sighted, you have great strength, and you are munificent and mighty. You are skillful and never do anything in vain; the things you will accomplish adorn you. I, on the other hand, I am content with what I have, though the way of life I have followed is painful. I move about in the woods however I wish, I am not acquainted with serving another. In those who live as dependents of a king, these are all faults subject to the king's censure. But life in the forest is without any ties, is free of fear, and has no restraints. The fear in the heart of a man being summoned by the king is not there for those who are content to live in the forest eating roots and fruits. When I consider sweet drink and food procured with ease, on the one hand, and accompanied by fear, on the other, don't I see that happiness is where there is contentment?"

"Not as many servants are punished by kings for offenses as go to their deaths ruined by their vices."

"But if I am to do this, if the king of beasts wishes it, I want an agreement made as to how I must be treated. You must honor what I say;° whatever I say that is beneficial, you must obey. The treatment you are extending to me now should continue as your consistent treatment of me. I shall not consult with your other ministers on anything. Wise in the ways of the world, lying in wait for me, those others will impute things to me falsely. By myself shall I meet with you by yourself and so declare in private what is for your good. You are not to ask me anything about what is good or bad for the affairs of your kinsmen. After you have consulted with me, none of the other ministers shall be harmed by you. And if you are angered at what I've said, you may not impose any punishment."

The king of the beasts then said, "It shall be so," and he received him with honor. And so a jackal gained a position as an advisor in a tiger's lair. The tiger's older retainers were a close-knit group, and they resented the jackal deeply as they saw him welcomed so hospitably and utilized like this in the king's work. Those ill-minded ones brought the jackal into their group and sought to conciliate him with talk of friendship—they wanted to get him to have the same attitude as they did with regard to violations. For otherwise they had previously been accustomed to carrying off the property of others; but now, curbed by the jackal, they couldn't take anything at all. They told him fetching stories to tempt him to neglect his duties. They tried to sway his thinking with large sums of money. But he was very wise, and he did not deviate from his firm commitments.

Then his enemies decided to destroy him, and they formed a plan. The lord of beasts was especially fond of meat that was specially prepared for him. The ministers stole that meat themselves and put it in the jackal's dwelling. For what reason it was stolen, by whom, and what was planned—all that was known to the jackal. But he suffered it to happen for the reason that, when he was just becoming the king's minister, he had made the agreement with him, "If you want my friendship, king, you should never take offense." As his meal was being served to him, the king did not see his meat, so he ordered, "Find the thief!" Dissimulating servants detailed the matter of his meat to the king this way: "It was taken by your learned minister, who is proud to be so wise." The tiger was enraged when he learned of the jackal's fickleness. The king was not about to let this pass, and he was inclined to have the jackal executed.

Seeing their opening against the jackal, the older ministers said, "This one is trying to wipe out the livelihood of every one of us. But his actions are protected because he is your favorite. But, master, he is not as you earlier heard him to be. On the basis of his say-so alone is he "Virtuous"; but by nature he is a violent creature. He feigns Virtue, but he is a wicked creature completely wrapped up in false behavior. He has made a great effort at the performance of vows having to do with food for some purpose of his own." When the tiger understood how the meat had been taken, he

followed their recommendation and commanded, "The jackal shall be executed."

55 But when his mother heard of the tiger's decree, she went to the king of beasts to enlighten him with some helpful words. "Son, do not accept this obscure business that perpetrates a deceitful conspiracy. An honest servant is being ruined by dishonest ones with their charges that spring from jealousy over his work. Someone cannot endure another who has risen high; the latter's precedence occasions hostility, and a charge is lodged against him, even though he is an honest servant who does his work. Honest beings are hateful to greedy ones, as the bold are to the faint-hearted, the learned to fools, the wealthy to the poor, the Virtuous to the Wicked, and the handsome to the ugly. Many of the learned are greedy; and they all live upon deceit and would bring charges against someone faultless, even if he had the wits of Bṛhaspati.

60 "As that meat was stolen° from your palace today when no one was present, you must consider carefully that he does not even like meat when it is given to him. Falsehoods can look like truths, truths can look like falsehoods. Various possibilities are apparent, and an inquiry into them is appropriate. The sky appears to have a wide, flat bottom-side, and the firefly looks like fire; but there is no bottom of the sky, and there is no fire in the firefly. Therefore, even something one has seen with one's own eyes needs to be investigated properly. He who pronounces upon matters after investigating them is not sorry afterwards. This is not a difficult thing to do, son, that the master concern himself with an important matter. Patience is commendable and should be preferred by the mighty in this world.

65 "You appointed him, son; he has become famous among all your ministers; he is an able servant whom you acquired only with difficulty, and he is a friend whom you should keep. The king who arrests a minister sullied by the charges of his enemies, a minister who is otherwise honest, completely ruins that minister and is himself quickly destroyed."

After that, someone from among the group of the jackal's enemies came to the king. He was a man devoted to what is Right and Lawful, and he told the king that this had been a deceitful conspiracy. Afterwards, his behavior completely understood, the jackal was treated hospitably and released. Then the king of beasts embraced him affectionately over and over. But the jackal, who knew the Learned Traditions of practical policy, was extremely upset by the king's not bearing with him, and, after he solicited the king's permission to speak, he said he wanted to undertake the *prāya* fast to the

70 death. The tiger, his eyes moist with affection, prevented the virtuous jackal, paying homage to him.

When the jackal saw that the tiger was flustered by his affection, he humbly spoke to him in words choked with sobs. "First you honored me,

then you humiliated me. You delivered me into the power of my enemies. I should no longer stay with you.

"All these beings are tools for one's enemy: Those who are extremely disgruntled, any who have been deprived of their position, those who have been toppled from honor, servants who have proffered themselves, and those who have been proffered by one's enemies, those who have shrunk to nothing, those who are greedy, those who are cruel, those tormented in prisons, anyone proud whose property has been taken, those seeking great gains who have risked what they have previously

75 acquired, those who have suffered greatly, and some who expect a torrent of disasters, those who are in hiding, and those who have been annexed.

"So how will you ever trust me again? Me whom you humiliated and then reappointed? And how will I ever trust you again? Having received me well with the judgment, 'He is competent'; having examined me and appointed me, you dishonored me after breaking the agreement we made. Had you kept your promise, you would have made no criticism of me whom you first introduced in a public assembly as 'virtuous.' How will you have confidence in me whom you dishonored like that? And I will be

80 anxious toward you, who are not trustworthy. You will be suspicious, I will be afraid, and your enemies will see this opening. Those who are disaffected are very difficult to satisfy. This was a very disturbing event.

"What is separate is commingled only painfully, and what is commingled is separated only painfully. Any pleasure that is both separate and commingled has nothing to do with affection.° You never see anyone who is afraid° both for himself and for another at the same time; one's thoughts bear upon what has to be done, and affectionate feelings then are scarce.

"Understanding people is very arduous, for their minds are both fixed and variable. 'Competent?' 'Weak?' Only one among hundreds is understood. For no apparent reason, some men rise to high positions and are able to cultivate greatness in good or bad circumstances with their supple minds; and for no apparent reason, some men decline."

85 After gladdening the king with this many-sided speech of conciliation with its arguments both profitable and Meritorious, the jackal returned to the forest. Refusing the inducements of the king of beasts, the intelligent jackal, sitting still in the *prāya* vow to fast to death, quit his body and went to heaven.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

113.1 What is it a king must do? What might he do to be happy? Tell me the whole truth about this, best of the supporters of Law.

Bhīṣma said:

All right, I will tell you. Hear this one necessary duty,° the one thing a king must do in this world. After he does this he will be happy. But he must not do what was done in this terrific report we've heard about a camel. Listen to this, Yudhiṣṭhira.

There was a great camel born in the Age of the Progenitor* who recalled his previous lives. Observing his vows scrupulously, he performed 5 tremendous asceticism in the forest. The Lord was pleased when his ascetic observances ended, so the Grandfather made him happy by granting him a wish.

The camel said:

Blessed one, by your grace may my neck be long enough to go out to graze a hundred *yojanas* in front of me, lord.

Bhīṣma said:

The exalted granter of wishes said, "It shall be so." The camel got his excellent wish and went to his own woods. The camel was stupid, and after his wish was granted he became lazy. Befuddled by Time, that bum disliked going out to graze. One time, having run his hundred *yojana* neck out, 10 he was grazing without a care in the world. Then a great wind came up. The beast poked his head and neck into a cave, and it got stuck there. Then a tremendous rain came and flooded the world. Then a hungry and exhausted jackal and his wife, who were both drenched and shivering with the cold, dashed into that cave. And when that carnivore that was terribly hungry and exhausted saw the camel's neck, he began to eat it, O bull of the Bharatas. When the beast realized he was being eaten, he was violently pained, and he tried hard to make himself smaller. The beast violently jerked his neck up and down, but the jackal and his wife ate away at him 15 all the while. The jackal killed the camel and ate him, and then, when the wind and the rain had passed, he exited the mouth of the cave.

So this is how the stupid camel met his end then and there. Notice how his great downfall came as a consequence of his laziness. You too must get rid of this attitude and live by working, your senses firmly under control. Manu said that victory is based on the Mind:°

> "Deeds done with the Mind are the best, those with the arms are middling, Bhārata, and lowest are those done with the legs, which are low because they bear the loads."

The government of an industrious man lasts, blameless one—a man who has his senses firmly in his grip and has good assistants; whose 20 ministerial reports and plans are well guarded secrets. Those kings whose means—and ends—are subject to careful examination last in this world,

* = Prajāpati, Brahmā, the Grandfather of all beings.

Yudhiṣṭhira. This entire earth can be governed by the king who has assistants.

> * This was recounted long ago by strictly observant men who know the rules, O you whose majesty rivals that of Great Indra. Now I have told it to you, with the understanding of Learned Tradition. Conduct yourself, king, with this in mind.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

114.1 When a weak king has succeeded to kingship, O bull of the Bharatas, how can he stand without any resources against an enemy that is terribly strong?

Bhīṣma said:

On this they recite this ancient account of a conversation between the ocean and the rivers. The ocean, the everlasting abode of the enemies of the Gods,† the lord husband of the rivers, asked all the rivers about something puzzling that had occurred to him. "I see shady trees you have knocked down root and branch when you were in spate, and I see other plants as 5 well, but I never see any reeds.° The reed grows on your banks with no body and just a bit of pith. Do you despise it as impotent, or has it done something for you? I want to hear what all of you think about the fact that though you smash those banks, you do not get control of the reed."

The River Gaṅgā made this answer to the ocean, the lord husband of the rivers—it was significant, reasoned, and persuasive. "Since trees stand upon their spot, rooted in a single place, never moving really, they leave that spot unwillingly as a result of our flowing against them. But when the reed sees the flood coming at it, it bends, as the other does not. When 10 the flood has passed by, it stands, having stayed in its place. It always understands the Time and season, and it is yielding as the tree is not. The reed goes with the current and is not rigid, so the reed never comes to you. Those plants, trees, and shrubs that bend over with the force of the wind or the water straighten up again and do not perish."

The king who does not wait out the first violent charge of a terribly strong enemy,° an enemy bent on killing and destroying him, goes quickly to ruin. He who knows the strengths and weaknesses, the power and the energy of himself and his enemy, and who then acts accordingly, is wise and does not perish. So then, when a discerning king judges his enemy to be much too powerful, he should resort to the "way of the reed," which is characterized by its wisdom.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

115.1 O suppressor of your enemies, how should an educated man who is

* One perfectly regular, classical upajāti triṣṭubh.
† = the Asuras.

mild act when he is being harshly abused in a public gathering by an impudent fool?

Bhīṣma said:

King, you have to hear how this subject has been treated in song.

In this world an intelligent man always puts up with the man of little intelligence. If he does not get angry, he acquires the accumulated merit of the one who is squawking; if he puts up with it, he wipes his own accumulated evil deeds onto the one who is angry. He should ignore that man as if he were a *ṭiṭṭibha** chirping in agony: "Having come to
5 be detested by everyone,† he has ended up in fruitless frustration." He is always boasting of his bad deeds, "I said this in a gathering of men about someone who is very well respected, and there he stands, ashamed of himself, shriveled up, wishing he were dead." Shameless, boasting of his rude deeds, such a low man should just be ignored by one who has self-control. Whatever the dim-witted man might say, one should always put up with that from him. Whether the ignoramus is praising or blaming, what effect will he actually have? He's like a stupid crow cawing uselessly in the woods. If there were any effective application of the words in a wicked man's uttering them, then talk alone would be the goal. But in fact talk is not the goal for someone who actually wants to do harm. His carrying on announces a perverse ejaculation,° like a dancing peacock that seems to be displaying its genitals.

10 The honest man ought not converse with a man whose every deed is labored, a man for whom there is nothing in the world that may not be said, nothing that may not be done.

He who speaks of someone's good qualities in person but criticizes him behind his back is a man who's like a dog in this world, and he's bound for wastelands in the world beyond. What such a man gives away to a hundred people, what he offers in sacrifices, he destroys in an instant with his behind-the-back calumnies. Therefore the wise man ever avoids such an evil-minded man, the way the strictly righteous avoid dog-meat.

A base man reproaching an exalted man puts his own faults on display,
15 as a cobra displays its hood when he spreads it out. When someone tries to rebut another who is retailing one's own deeds, that first man sinks in his energetic passion, the way a stupid ass sinks in a pile of ashes.

> ‡ You should quit the man who gossips about people constantly,
> as if he were a crabby house-cat, a trumpeting elephant, or a
> very mean dog.
>
> He goes down the path so pleasing to the fickle—no self-
> control, no discipline—loves mischief and is always behaving
> like an enemy—damn that wicked-minded, wicked man!

* = *Parra jacana*. † A sample of the churl's talk. ‡ Four classical upajāti triṣṭubhs.

> If they talk back to you, do not wear a pained expression as you
> listen. Those of sound understanding condemn such
> intercourse of the high with the low.
>
> Angered, he may strike with his fist of five, or he may kick dirt
> or chaff upon you, or he may frighten you by baring his teeth—
> it is a known fact that a fool is violent when he is angry.

20
> * The man who puts up with churls in public and endures the
> abuses uttered by the worst bums may ever read this
> description and never feel any pain from words alone.

(84n) The Servants of the King, Part 2

12.116–19 (B. 115–19; C. 4231–4350)

116 (115; 4231). Yudhiṣṭhira asks how a king may make his kingdom thrive, his subjects happy, and his own family comfortable. He worries specifically that the king might ruin the kingdom if, out of affection, he favors the wrong men as his advisors (1–5). He asks Bhīṣma to teach him some of the difficult Laws for kings, specifically requesting instruction on the kind of men the king should have as retainers (5–10). Bhīṣma recites a litany of virtues the king's retainers should have if the king is to enjoy the fruits of the kingdom and of his Meritorious, Lawful Deeds (10–20).

117 (116–17; 4254). Bhīṣma illustrates his points about retaining the wrong kind of men and the corruption of retainers with The Story of the Ungrateful Dog, *which had been told to him by seers in the retreat of Rāma Jāmadagnya. A highly virtuous seer once lived in the forest amid ferocious beasts of prey, who treated him as their preceptor. There was a dog that never left the seer and imitated his way of life (1–10). A hungry leopard once stalked the dog, and the seer turned the dog into a leopard, thus saving him. His old companion, now a leopard, stayed with the seer; then a tiger stalked the leopard and the seer changed the leopard into a tiger, saving him again. The pattern recurred: the seer*

* One jagatī stanza in which the first and last verses are Rucirā pādas.

changed the erstwhile dog into an elephant, a lion, and then an eight-legged śarabha, *the most powerful of beasts (10–35). The* śarabha *fed happily upon forest prey, but in time all surviving animals had fled the forest in fear, so the* śarabha *turned upon the seer. The seer realized that his affection for the beast had blinded him to the beast's fundamental nature as a dog, and he turned the beast back into a dog (35–40).*
118 (118; 4303). The seer then expelled the dog from the hermitage. In the same way, Bhīṣma says, the king must take care to examine prospective retainers carefully and appoint only good, well-born men (1–5). Bhīṣma lists many more skills and virtues the king should require of his retainers (5–15). He then lists attitudes and virtues that should characterize the king, emphasizing the understanding that human effort is critically important and also the need to use the rod of force (15–20). Bhīṣma concludes this passage on kings by listing some of the qualities the king's warriors should have (20–25).
119 (119; 4331). Bhīṣma draws an explicit lesson from the story of the dog: The king must take care to appoint people whose nature is well suited to the tasks they are to perform (1–10). Bhīṣma lists again the qualities that determine whom the king should and should not appoint (5–10). The king should have near him only people who share his lionlike, magnificent qualities (10–15). Bhīṣma concludes with general advice to the king about the importance of building the treasury, keeping his warriors busy, and looking after his relatives and townspeople (15–20).

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

116.1 Grandfather, who are so very wise, I have this great doubt. You must dispel it, king, for you are the head of our clan. You have just told me, grandpa, about the way ill-behaved louts can talk about one. Now I ask you what is good for the government of a kingdom, what brings happiness to the clan, both now and in the future, and what effects security and growth? Tell me what will serve to please my sons and grandsons,° what makes the kingdom thrive, and what is good for the body in food and 5 drink. When a king who has been ritually consecrated is present in his kingdom and is surrounded by allies, how does he make his subjects happy? Or when he has enemies at hand?

When a king, compelled by passion and affection, devotes himself to gratifying men who are not observant, when he tries to be of service to unobservant people because he lacks control over his senses, then all his

retainers from good families become corrupted, and that king never realizes the benefits that result from good retainers.

O you who are the equal of Bṛhaspati in intellect, you ought to recite to me in my puzzlement those Laws of kings that are so hard to come by. O tiger among men, you who are devoted to the welfare of our clan are the one who recites these things to us. (The steward,* who is wise in a clever 10 sort of way, recites things to us all the time as well.) Once I hear from you a teaching that will promote the clan's welfare, which will also spell the welfare of the kingdom, I will sleep happily, sated with a nectar that seems never to spoil.

Now what sort of retainers with what attributes should a king have near to hand? Or with what sort of men from what families is the work best carried out? For a king by himself without retainers is not a sufficient guardian, and every man of his clan criticizes this kingdom. A kingdom cannot be ruled by one man alone,° Bhārata. He who has no assistant, grandpa, cannot gain riches, and even if he gains them, he can never keep them, O bull of the Bharatas.

Bhīṣma said:

A king enjoys the fruits of the kingdom when every one of his staff is skillful at seeing matters and analyzing them, truly seeks what promotes welfare, is from a good clan, and is affectionate toward the king.

15 A king enjoys the fruits of the kingdom when his advisors are men of good families, incapable of being subverted, dwell with him, give the king advice, are skilled in understanding relationships, can arrange things that are still in the future, are experts in understanding different occasions, and do not grieve for what is past and over.

A king enjoys the fruits of the kingdom when his associates hold pleasure and pain to be the same, always act honestly, and always reflect upon matters.

He would be a king who enjoys the fruits of the kingdom if no afflicted citizen were ever to approach him, and if his citizens were high-minded and tenaciously followed the path of the strictly observant.

A king is the highest among kings when his treasury and records office° are continuously maintained by men who make the treasury increase, men who are trusted and content.

20 A king's treasure house becomes one of his excellent attributes when it is looked after by trustworthy men who cannot be subverted, worthy men dedicated to accumulation, but not greedy.

* = Vidura.

He would be a king who enjoys the fruits of his Meritorious Justice if the judicial proceedings in his city cause actions to yield their proper consequences, and if he is seen to be strictly just.°

The king enjoys the consequences of his Lawful, Meritorious Deeds when he knows the Laws of kings, is a completely restrained man, and keeps a firm hold of the set of six.*

Bhīṣma said:

117.1 On this they recite this ancient account that will illustrate the point in ordinary terms, something the strictly observant always do. I heard it in Rāma Jāmadagnya's ascetic grove; it was recited by that most excellent of seers, and it is germane to this matter.

In some great forest where no other human beings lived, there was a seer who observed many strict restraints: He lived upon roots and fruits, his senses were strictly restrained, and he was dedicated to self-control as part of his consecration; he had become calm within, was dedicated to his daily recitation of the Vedas, and was untainted; his body had been cleaned out by fasting, and he was committed to staying always upon the path of 5 the strictly observant. All the forest creatures became thoroughly familiar with the exalted goodness of that wise one who sat there, and they would approach him—lions, tigers, *śarabhas,*° rutting elephants, leopards, rhinos, bears, and other frightful looking animals. These carnivorous beasts would simply greet the seer with polite inquiries about his well-being. They would humble themselves before him and do him favors as if they were his pupils.

Normally they would go as they had come after making their inquiries, but there was one animal there, a village dog, who never left the great seer. Devoted to the seer, and attached to him affectionately, the dog was emaciated and weak from constant fasting. Eating only roots, fruits, and garbage, having become completely calm within, he had something of the 10 look of a wise man. The creature° was intensely bound by affection, and when the seer was seated, it would go to the soles of the great hermit's feet, but in a human way.°

Once a tremendously powerful, carnivorous leopard came there because of the dog; it was an absolutely wicked, cruel beast, like end-making Time—famished, licking its lips, whipping its tail back and forth; wracked with hunger, its mouth was open, and it was stalking that dog as its prey. O king, when he saw that cruel beast approaching, the dog, in fear of its life, spoke to the hermit. Highly intelligent man, hear what he said. "Blessed one, a leopard, an enemy of dogs, wants to kill me. Great sage, may I have no fear of it, by your grace!"

* = the six measures of foreign policy; see note to 12.57.16.

The hermit said:

15 Have no fear at all of death from the leopard. You are losing your dog form, son, and becoming a leopard!

Bhīṣma said:

Then the dog became a leopard with a golden form. Delighted, his beautiful body flashing, he lived in the forest without any fear. Then a terribly ferocious, blood-thirsty tiger approached the leopard; its mouth was gaping with hunger, and its tongue was licking at the corners of its mouth. When he saw that hunger-wracked tiger, that fanged beast of the forest, the leopard went to the hermit for protection to save its life. Expressing, as always, the affection that grew from their life together, the seer turned the leopard into a tiger more powerful than his enemy. When the tiger saw him then, it did not attack, O lord of peoples.

20 But having become a powerful tiger with meat for its food, the dog now had no taste at all for its former fare of roots and fruits. As the king of beasts regularly stalks the denizens of the forest, so did this tiger, great king. Once, the tiger had gorged himself upon his prey and was asleep near the hermit's hut. A rutting elephant came to that spot; it was as if a cloud had moved across the sky. Its temples secreting fluid, the elephant was large—it had a wide head, long tusks, and a massive body—and it rumbled deeply like a thunder-head.° When he saw that rutting elephant coming at him with the surliness of rut,° the tiger was terrified with fear of the elephant and 25 went to the seer for protection. That most excellent of seers then turned the tiger into an elephant, and the attacking elephant was afraid when he saw the other looking like an immense thunder-head. Then he wandered about, joyously plunging into lotus-clusters and frankincense thickets, and he was decorated with the pollen dust of lotuses. Time went by, night by night, with the elephant cheerfully enjoying himself near the seer's hut.

One time a tawny-maned lion came to that place. Born in a mountain valley, that terrifying lion had spelled the end of whole herds of elephants. When the elephant saw the lion coming, he was beside himself with fear 30 of it. Terrified and trembling, he went to the seer for protection. The hermit then turned that lord of elephants into a lion, and that one then took no notice of the wild lion, because he belonged to the same species. But the wild lion disappeared when he saw the other, his roar suppressed from fear. That lion then dwelled happily in the hermitage in the forest. But the smaller animals that lived in the ascetic grove were too scared ever to be seen there, as they wished to stay alive.

Then, at some point later in the working of Time, a powerful, carnivorous, denizen of the forest, an eight-legged *śarabha* (with some of its feet directed upwards) that frightened every kind of creature, came to the 35 seer's dwelling to kill the lion. O tamer of your enemies, the hermit made the lion into a *śarabha* of even more ferocious might. Then the wild *śarabha*

saw the hermit's *śarabha* before him, and when he saw that that one was even more powerful and ferocious than himself, he ran off swiftly in terror.

After the hermit had in this way put him in the situation of being a *śarabha,* he was always at the hermit's side, and regularly he enjoyed the pleasures of being a *śarabha.* The herds of the animals, terrified of the *śarabha,* fled the forest in every direction, trying to save their lives. The absolutely wicked *śarabha* regularly engaged in killing creatures and eating their flesh, though he had no desire to eat the tranquil sage who ate roots and fruits. Then, overcome with a mighty thirst for blood, the 40 ungrateful *śarabha,* born of a dog's womb, wanted to kill the hermit. But, by virtue of his asceticism, the hermit saw this with the eye of knowledge. Having understood the matter, the wise hermit said to the dog,

"You were a dog who became a leopard, and as a leopard you became a tiger, as a tiger you became an elephant raging in rut, as an elephant you became a lion, as a lion of tremendous power you next became a *śarabha.* But I, filled with affection, did not take into account your affiliation with your race. Since you, wicked beast, wish to harm me who am not wicked, you have thus come back to your own nature and so you shall be a dog again."

Then that stupid one of the dog species,° corrupted to the point of being hostile toward the seer, was cursed by the seer, and that *śarabha* acquired his proper form once again.

Bhīṣma said:

118.1 That dog, having returned to its original nature, became very depressed. The seer buzzed *huṃ* at the evil beast° and expelled him from his ascetic grove.

As we see here,° the king of good judgment should appoint well-trained retainers to tasks for which they are suited after he has ascertained the integrity of their character, their rectitude, basic nature, courage, race, way of living, learning, self-control, compassion, strength, energy, state of mind, tranquility, and patience. A king should not make someone a retainer without having carefully examined him; the king who is 5 surrounded by low-born men does not thrive happily. A well-born man appointed by the king never sets his mind on evil, not even when he is being criticized when he has done nothing wrong, because he is as well-born as the king. But when a man who is not well-born is appointed because of a shortage of good men, he becomes difficult to control, and when he is criticized, he becomes an enemy.

The king is not disappointed in his minister when he appoints one who is well bred, well trained, wise, skillful at seeing matters and analyzing them, who understands the real purport of all Learned Teachings, who can put up with a lot, who knows the country, is grateful, strong, forgiving, self-controlled, has his senses under control, is not greedy, is satisfied with what he has got, is helpful to his colleagues and his master, is a minister

who understands different places and times, is devoted to promoting the welfare of all, has done well, whose mind is always working, who wants 10 the general good, who never wearies, who always acts properly in his own department, who is skilled in peace and war, who is acquainted with the Group of Three,* who is well liked by the king's citizens in town and country, who is an expert in moats and military arrays, who is skilled at inspiring the army, who knows the real significance of gestures and expressions, who is expert in vehicles and expeditions, expert in the training of elephants, who is devoid of egotism, resolute, sincere, self-controlled, strong, does only what is appropriate, who is clean and lives among clean people, who is well dressed, good looking, a leader, skilled in administration, endowed with the six attributes, not obstinate, modest, able, soft-spoken, wise, gentle, very prosperous, able to engineer the places 15 and times suitable to his purposes.° That king's rule spreads widely, like the light of the lord of the planets.†

The king one should want is possessed of these attributes, is well conversant with the Learned Traditions, holds Law to be supreme, and is totally dedicated to protecting his subjects; wise, long-suffering, honest, swift, who knows the value of human effort across Time, willing to learn, learned, a good listener, well versed in drawing and denying conclusions, smart, who engages in concentrating the mind, who engineers things in the right ways, is self-controlled, always says kind things, is forgiving when there is a mistake, is his own agent in unstintingly making gifts,° whose sense-organs are sound,° who has a pleasant demeanor, who lends a hand to the afflicted, who is constantly regarded as trustworthy, 20 and is devoted to administration; not self-centered, not unaware of the pairs of opposites,‡ not one to do just anything whatsoever, not one to do anything useless when an operation is over and done, one who does hold his retainers dear; a thoroughly restrained man, not obstinate, his face always cheerful, generous, attentive to his retainers, not quick to anger, extremely magnanimous, who uses the rod of force and does not fail to use the rod of punishment, who commands the doing of Lawful responsibilities, who has spies for his eyes, who is attentive to his enemy, who is always conversant with what is Right and what is useful. A king such as that, who is dotted with hundreds of good qualities, is the king you should want.

O king of men, warriors, exceptional men who are endowed with all the good qualities, should be sought after as companions who will support the king, and the king who wants to obtain prosperity must show them no 25 disrespect. These warriors should be haughty in battle, grateful, experts

* = the three interests—dharma, artha, and kāma.

† = the moon.

‡ = the categories of evaluation: right-wrong, pleasant-painful, and so forth; those cultivating the equanimity of yoga, on the other hand, are encouraged to regard the world without these pairs of opposites.

with weapons, conversant with the Learned Traditions of what is Right and what is useful. They should be joined by infantry. The earth belongs to the king whose warriors are replete with riches and honors, experts in the driving of chariots, skilled in the shooting of arrows.

The king who is always busy offering benefits to all, who makes manly exertion a matter of habit, who is extremely rich in allies is the most excellent of kings. This entire world can be won by a man who is thoroughly restrained with the help of just a thousand hero-topped horses, Bhārata.

Bhīṣma said:

119.1 A king enjoys the benefits of rule when he appoints to tasks retainers who, unlike that dog, are in their proper places. When he passed out of his proper place against the standard, the dog was no longer welcome. The dog should have been fixed in its place; having passed out of its proper place, it became something else. Those who are limited to their proper jobs, who are perfectly suited to them by virtue of their particular caste* and family, and who are intelligent, should be appointed as retainers of the king. Promotion of them to what is not their place is not right. The king who offers suitable jobs to his retainers enjoys the benefits that grow so 5 well from the good qualities of his retainers. A *śarabha* should be in the condition of a *śarabha,* a lion should be mighty like a lion. A tiger should be fixed as a tiger, a leopard as a leopard, and so on. The king's retainers should be appropriately assigned to suitable occupations; they should not be appointed contrarily, if the king wants the benefits of his works. If a stupid king transgresses the standard and appoints his retainers contrarily, he does not make his subjects happy.

A king who wishes for the welfare of his kingdom should not appoint to his side men who are simpletons, nor petty men, nor men whose faculties do not match the job, nor men coming from lesser families.

Virtuous men, who are skillful, heroic, insightful, not resentful, not petty, honest, and industrious should be the retainers of the king who are 10 at his side. Humble, dedicated, tolerant, clean, without affectation,° nice, who make no complaints about their particular positions should be the retainers of the king who work outside his court.

Only a being who is truly a lion should be constantly at the side of a lion. He who is not a lion gets benefits as if he were a lion when in the company of a lion; but a lion who is surrounded by dogs when engaged in the work of a lion cannot enjoy the benefits of being a lion, attended as he is by dogs. Similarly, lord of men, the king who is accompanied by heroic men who are learned, wise, and born of good families is able to conquer the entire earth.

O best of those who engage retainers, kings should accept no one

* = *jāti.*

without learning, no one dishonest, no one ignorant, no one who is not 15 very rich. The king should be solicitous of his retainers when they go like arrows upon being dispatched, when they are dedicated to what their master needs done and work for his welfare.

Kings should always take care to preserve their treasury. Kings stand upon the base of their treasury. Be a king who builds his base, his treasury. Let your store-house always be swollen, well stocked with grain, and let it always be entrusted to strictly righteous people. Be a king who is concerned with his riches and his grain-stores.

Your retainers who are skilled in warfare must always be busy. Expertise in the ways of using horses is highly desirable.

Be attentive to your kinsmen and affines, be surrounded by your friends and relatives, seek the welfare of the people of the city, O scion of the Kurus.

20 I have now declared this final idea, this wisdom, to you. Let the dog be an example to you, son. What more do you wish to hear?

(84) The Laws for Kings (Continued)

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

120.1 Bharata, you have declared numerous elements of a king's behavior that were specified in the past by earlier experts in the matter of the Laws for kings. Seen by the ancients, esteemed by the strictly observant, it has been declared at length, O bull of the Bharatas. Declare to me now the public manifestation of the king's Lawful Deeds.

Bhīṣma said:

Protecting all beings is regarded as what is most important for the *kṣatra* Order of society. Listen, king, to how one should do this protecting.

Just as a peacock's tail has feathers of many colors,° so should a king who knows the Laws display many different forms—sharpness, 5 deviousness, indomitability,° truthfulness, and rectitude; standing in the middle of all of them,* relying upon his mettle, he reaches a comfortable position. He should take whatever coloration would be good for some particular affair. Even his very delicate affairs succeed when a king can take on many different forms.°

* That is, the different forms.

His words bland, his body smooth, a king endowed with Royal Splendor who is well versed in the Learned Traditions should always keep his plans secret, the way a peacock is mute in the autumn.

He should stand sentry in the gateways of crisis, as the peacock does at waterfalls;° and as the peacock relies upon the water from rain showers and mountain streams, so he should rely upon brahmins and accomplished ascetics. The king who desires success should display a peacock's crest, a likeness of the "flag of Law."*

Having observed the income and expenditures of his people and being ever ready with the rod of force, the king should act with never failing attention, like a peacock flying from one tree to the next.

10 He should be clean before his subjects; as the peacock, in flocks of his own kind, scratches away the vermin° with his feet, so the king should flick away his attachments by doing good deeds.

His wings having grown,° he should flap them.† And he should always protect his weaknesses. But he should uncover his enemy's faults, and he should grab and shake his enemy's wings violently.

He should bring all his affairs to completion, as the peacock perfects the flowers of the forests.°

He should rely upon the most eminent and rich kings, as if they were mountains; he should seek refuge with them secretly, the way a peacock repairs to the murky shadows.

As the peacock dives into the monsoon rains,‡ so, at night, unobserved, with no one else around, the king should behave with his wives in the peacock style.

He should never take off his armor, and he himself should guard himself. He should avoid getting trapped in a pen,° and he should avoid snares; he should destroy that place and then vanish once again into the dense jungle.

15 As the peacock kills noxious snakes, the king should kill the noxious who move in crooked ways when they are enraged or too venomous. And he cannot rely upon his army alone, as the peacock cannot merely spread his tail; the king should settle in his kingdom people who can be made to live together with the strictly observant.§

* A point made in connection with the patronage of brahmins and ascetics just mentioned; usually the "flag of Law" *(dharmadhvaja)* refers to a hypocritical display of doing right.

† Referring not to flight, but to the way large birds arch their backs and stretch and beat their wings.

‡ To do its mating dance.

§ Text note: see endnote at 120.15.

If he resembles the peacock always, he may do what his attachments dictate, as he likes.° One should take wisdom from everywhere, like a peacock snapping up insects flying in the woods. This is how a king should protect his realm, acting like a peacock.

The expert king should ordain policy that will effect his own growth. Restraint of oneself with one's own Higher Mind, diminishing the enemy's Higher Mind, attaining the virtues of the soul by means of the Higher Mind—this is what the Learned Traditions teach. He should make his enemy trusting by conciliation; he should take careful note of his own power; he should use his Higher Mind to make his Higher Mind reflect upon his Self. Considering what to do and what not do, the wise king judges in favor of using conciliation. The wise king should keep his thoughts concealed; thus, when someone must be censured, the wise king will make only a narrowly pertinent declaration, if he is the equal of Bṛhaspati in intellect. He* will then revert to his true nature, the way black iron does when heated red hot and placed in water.

20 The king should order all the obligatory duties that tradition has prescribed for him and for others. He should assign the appropriate works to the men who are petty, cruel, wise, heroic, or skilled with money; and also to those who are superior speakers. Even when he does not see them, the king should follow the progress of the works he has assigned in corresponding models, just as a drone string on an instrument, when tuned with the proper tension, imitates sympathetically the notes played.° He should do kindness to all, without going counter to any Laws. The king of whom they say, "He is my king," is as unshakable as a mountain. Having made a firm commitment, he should carefully adhere to Law, doing kind and unkind deeds alike,° like the sun amidst the rays that stretch out from him.

25 The king should establish in all offices men who will preserve both Merit and Riches, and who know the different norms applying to different tribes, different natures, and different places; men who are soft-spoken, who are without fault in mid-life, who are busy promoting the general welfare; men who have conquered their senses and are not greedy, who are educated, self-controlled, and firmly committed to the Laws. In this fashion the busy king should attend to the ebb and flow of his projects; assisted by spies, he may rest contented. The earth bears wealth for the king whose anger and joy are never vain, who makes his own investigations of his projects, who looks into his treasury himself. When a king's favors to some are plain to see, and his wealth, and also the curbs he places on some—when that king himself is well guarded, and his realm too, then that is a king who knows the Law of kings!

* = the one being censured.

30 Like the sun rising with the herds of his cows,* he should look out over his country regularly; he should know both moving† and unmoving, and through intelligent understanding he will have no worry. Milking the earth day by day, like a cow, the king of intelligent understanding should appropriate what he acquires in the course of Time, but he should not call attention to that wealth. As the bee accumulates honey gradually from many flowers, the king takes up material goods and makes an accumulation. Any sum beyond what is reserved should be allocated to Lawful, Meritorious Undertakings and Pleasurable Indulgences. The king who understands the Learned Traditions and who is in possession of himself should both accumulate and spend.

He should not despise small amounts of wealth; he should not be contemptuous of his enemies. He should be conscious of himself with intelligent understanding, and he should trust none who do not have intelligent understanding.

35 ‡ Perseverance, initiative, self-restraint, the highest level of intelligent understanding, fortitude, heroism, place-and-time, and attentiveness—these are the eight logs for firing the growth of wealth, whether it be a lot or a little.

When a fire with a small flame is sprinkled with clarified butter, it gets bigger; a single seed becomes many thousands of seeds; so, even though he observes tremendous declines and increases in accumulations, a man of learning does not despise any little bit.

Any one who is an enemy—be he child, adult, or oldster—can always cut down a careless man. In Time another can take over his very base—he who understands Time is the choicest of kings.

A hateful enemy, be he weak or strong, can take one's reputation, can obstruct one's doing his Lawful Deeds; or he could, for a long time, assault the king's energy for his affairs. Therefore, the self-restrained king does not frivolously antagonize his enemy.

Diminishing the enemy on the one hand while accumulating and keeping on the other are both Practical Matters, and these two are joined with Matters of Law and Pleasure. An intelligent man contributes something beyond these, so the king should rely upon a man of intelligent understanding.

* = the sun's rays. † This word *(cārān)* also means "spies."
‡ Twelve stanzas of mixed triṣṭubhs.

40 A brilliant mind slays a mighty man; strength guarded by intelligence grows greater. An enemy waxing strong declines through one's own intelligence; a deed done after intelligent reflection is the better for it.

The king who pursues all his desires is wise indeed; for when his realm is suddenly overrun, a king with just a little material substance is physically weak. Since he seeks to establish himself through riches and honors, it is best that he fill his bowl plentifully.

Therefore, the king who is isolated amid enemy kings should take the foundation of his riches from everywhere. Though he be sorely pressed, even for a long time, he will come to have the might of a bolt of lightning and enjoy the same respect.

Learning, asceticism, tremendous wealth—all these are possible through determined commitment. *Brahman* dwells in our souls, ever watchful.°* Therefore, one should recognize that determined commitment is most important.

As the intelligent and spirited Śakra, Viṣṇu, and Sarasvatī sit in it; as the elements ever reside in it, a knowing man never despises the body.

45 One should slay the greedy man with regular generosity; but a greedy man is never satisfied to see the property of others. Every greedy man living upon the good qualities that come from his past deeds abandons Lawful, Meritorious Deeds and Pleasure when he loses his Riches.

Every greedy man seeks the money, luxuries, wife, children, and prosperity of others. All the faults there are in this world arise all together in the greedy man. Therefore, the king ought show no favor to greedy men.

He should order a good man, even a man of low standing, to watch everything. The wise man should destroy all the undertakings and all the plans of those hostile to him. His minister should be well known among those concerned with Law, and he should keep secrets, be trustworthy, well-born, and able to further the kingdom, O son of Pāṇḍu.

† Pay attention with your understanding to the Laws for Gods among men,‡ which were set in motion for the sake of ordered

* This statement seems intended to identify "determined commitment" *(vyavasāya)* as a form of *brahman.*
† One classical upajāti triṣṭubh stanza. ‡ = kings.

action, and which have been declared in brief. The king who carefully goes through them all and puts them into effect is a king competent to protect the earth.

50 * If rich, manifold happiness is seen to come by mere chance rather than from royal policy or providence, then that king does not have a happy course after death, and his realm does not know the highest happiness.

The self-possessed king who has allied himself with the strictly observant people cuts down his enemies in short order, though they may be superior in wealth, celebrated for their intelligence and their character, endowed with good qualities, have demonstrated courage in battle, and have come under consideration in terms of the six measures of policy.°

He should look at strategies with different courses of action, but he must not commit his mind without having some strategy. The man who merely sees the problems† does not enjoy outstanding riches, nor extensive fame, nor wealth.

When there has been pleasure among friends which then comes to an end, the wise man who knows both parties well after they've broken off speaks most tenderly of the one of them that bears the heavier burden.

‡ For protecting people, put your mind to these Laws of kings that I have declared to you. You will acquire auspicious results happily. Indeed, everyone is grounded upon Law, which is what is highest in the world.

(84o) The Origin of the Rod of Punishment

12.121–22 (B. 121–22; C. 4408–4524)
121 (121; 4408). Yudhiṣṭhira refers back to Bhīṣma's earlier points about the rod of force. He praises it and asks some fundamental questions about it (1–5). Bhīṣma provides a multifaceted description and grounding of the king's wielding

* Four classical upajāti jagatī triṣṭubh stanzas.
† But does not remedy them.
‡ One classical upajāti triṣṭubh.

of punishment and military force, and he does so with a series of definitions, equations, and descriptions of different applications of the rod of force. First he asserts that everything depends upon punishment, and then he launches into a characterization of its legitimacy: The judicial process (vyavahāra) *is a process of Law* (dharma)*; he cites Manu to the effect that a good king protecting his subjects and applying punishment fairly is the embodiment of Law. Manu's statement is the first characterization of Law (5–10). The rod of force is the source of the three goods of life (Lawful Merit, Riches, and Pleasure), and it is a terrifying divine being (10–15). The rod of force is the essence of all weapons, and it has many names in this world, such as Shattering, Victory, Chastiser, Law, and so forth (15–20). It also takes many forms, such as Viṣṇu, happiness and misery, freedom and bondage, power and impotence, Right and Wrong, and so on (20–30). It is the most important thing in the world and in the king's realm, because it keeps people from ravaging each other (30–35). On the other hand, Law that is grounded in transcendent reality rests among the brahmins. The Vedic rites of the brahmins please the Gods, who provide the food that nurtures life on earth. Food makes life possible, and punishment preserves it. The rod of punishment is Lord, breath, soul, and so forth (35–40). It is manifest in the eightfold army that gives the king lordship (40–45). Bhīṣma then makes some general remarks about different species of judicial procedure* (vyavahāra) *(45–55).*
122 (122; 4469). On this topic Bhīṣma relates The Conversation between King Vasuhoma and Māndhātar. *Vasuhoma, the righteous king of the Aṅgas, was also a great ascetic who went into the Himālayas with his wife and performed ascetic vows. King Māndhātar, a friend of Indra's, happened to meet him, and Māndhātar asked Vasuhoma about the origins of the rod of force (1–10). Vasuhoma related that Brahmā produced a son, Kṣupa, once when that God needed a worthy priest to perform a sacrifice (10–15). While engaged in the sacrifice, Brahmā was in a good mood, and as a consequence, the rod of punishment disappeared, and everything fell into confusion among people (15–20). Brahmā appealed to Viṣṇu, and that God then created the rod of force from his own self. Viṣṇu meditated further and then made Indra the lord over the Gods, Yama the lord of Ancestors, Meru the lord of mountains, Death the lord of life, Śiva the lord of the Rudras, Vasiṣṭha the lord of seers, Soma the lord of*

plants, Time the lord of all beings and of Death, happiness, and misery (20–30).

Apparently giving an alternative history, Vasuhoma told Māndhātar that Śiva gave to Brahmā his son Kṣupa to be the overlord of creatures and guardian of Law. Śiva then gave Viṣṇu the rod of force. Viṣṇu gave it to Aṅgiras, and it passed down through several others to Kṣupa, Manu, and Manu's sons (30–35).

Vasuhoma then offered some generalities on the imposition of punishments, especially corporal punishments (40). Then he listed a succession of those that stand watch over creatures with punishment, starting with the rod of punishment itself, then Indra and others, Soma, the Gods, brahmins, and kṣatriyas (40–50). Bhīṣma concludes with praise of the rod of force (55).

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

121.1 You have declared the everlasting Law for kings, grandfather, and that lord that is the great rod of punishment. Everything is based upon the rod of punishment. O lord, the rod of punishment that reaches everywhere with its tremendous fiery energy is the best thing for all living beings dwelling in this world—for Gods, seers, the exalted ancestors, Yakṣas, Rākṣasas, Piśācas, and especially mortal men; and even for animals.

You, sir, have declared that everything moving and unmoving is subject to punishment. This world with Gods, demons, and men is observed to be 5 strongly attached to punishment.° I want to understand this exactly as it is, O bull of the Bharatas: What is the rod of punishment? What kind of thing is it? What is its manifest form? What is its chief end? What does it consist of? How did it come to be? How many concrete forms does it have? How is it a lord? How does the rod of punishment that is so thoroughly attentive to creatures stay awake? And who is it that stays awake early and late, watching? Who was it understood to be at first? And who is this later one that is designated "the rod of punishment?" What rule does the rod of punishment follow? And what procedure is prescribed for it?

Bhīṣma said:

Listen, scion of Kuru, to what the rod of punishment is and to how it is judicially prescribed; for the rod of punishment is the one thing in this world upon which everything depends.

Great king, "judicial process"* is regarded to be a name of Law. The very proceeding of judicial process is directed to this end: "How may this,† which applies to the populated realms, not be interrupted?"

* = *vyavahāra.*

† Law, dharma, the whole collectivity of Meritorious Deeds.

10 And also, king, this was declared long ago, at the beginning, by Manu:

"He by himself is Law,° namely, the king who protects his subjects perfectly with punishments applied well and equitably both to those he likes and those he dislikes."

(Now before this statement was uttered long ago by Manu,° there was creation, which Vasiṣṭha declared to be Brahmā's great statement. It* was declared before this statement,† therefore it is the earliest statement.)

It is called "judicial process"‡ in this world because there is in it an accounting of a lawsuit.

The three goods§ always proceed from the rod of force that is well applied.

The rod of force supreme is a divine being: It is like a blazing fire in physical appearance. Dark as the petal of a blue lotus, it has four tusks, four arms, eight feet,° many eyes, sharply pointed ears, and bristling hair.° 15 The hair on its head is twisted in braids, and it has two tongues, a reddish mouth, and the skin of the king of beasts.° Irresistible force always displays this savage form.

All the weapons there are in this world, whatever they are—sword, mace, bow, pike staff, trident, hammer, arrow, club, axe, discus, dart, stick, spear, lance: the rod of force is the essence of every one of them. It always acts in this world in a concrete bodily form. The rod of force acts by breaking, cutting, smashing, slicing, shattering, cleaving, killing, and attacking. Here, Yudhiṣṭhira, is a list of the names of the rod of force: Sword, Slicer, Law, Sharp-edged, Irresistible, Embryo of Royal Splendor, 20 Victory, Ruler, Adjudication, Watchman, Command, Brahmin-spell, Punisher Who Goes Back to the Earliest Utterance, Protector of Law, Indestructible, God, Truthful, Eternal, Grabber, Aloof, Son of Rudra, Eldest Son of Manu, Auspicious.

Indeed, the rod of force is the blessed Viṣṇu, Lord Nārāyaṇa, who bears a vast and everlasting form and is called the Vast Person; and Lakṣmī, who has been said to be the daughter of Brahmā, Administration, Sarasvatī, the Administration of Punishment, and the Wet-Nurse of the Universe. Indeed the rod of force has many embodiments:° good and bad, happiness and misery, Right and Wrong, strength and weakness, bad fortune and good 25 fortune, auspicious and pernicious, good quality and defect, desire and aversion; season, month, night, day, and moment; favor and disfavor, joy

* Brahmā's "statement," that is, creation.

† Manu's declaration that the king is dharma.

‡ Apparently resuming the discussion of the name of this process interrupted by stanzas 10–12 (see endnote to 12.121.11–12ab). "It is called *vyavahāra* because there is in it an account of a *vyavahāra.*"

§ Lawful Merit, Riches, and Pleasure.

and anger, inner calm, self-control, fate and human effort, freedom and bondage, danger and safety, harmfulness and harmlessness; asceticism, rites of sacrificial worship, self-restraint, pernicious and innocuous; end, beginning, and middle; the proliferation of witches, intoxication, heedlessness, pride, and hypocrisy and forthrightness; good policy and bad policy, power and impotence, arrogance, obstinacy, change and stability, discipline and letting loose, the right time and the wrong time, Bhārata; falsehood, knowing and not knowing, truth, religious zeal and apathy, cowardice and commitment, gaining and failing, winning and losing,
30 hardness and gentleness, and death; getting and not getting, success and frustration, what must be done and what must not be done, strength and weakness, resenting and not resenting, Right and Wrong, shyness and boldness, shame, perfection and miscarriage; fiery energy in doing action, wisdom, eloquence, and the understanding of basic realities—thus does the rod of force have many forms in this world, O scion of Kuru.

If the rod of force did not exist in this world, beings would be nasty and brutish to each other. Because they fear punishment, beings do not kill each other, Yudhiṣṭhira. As they are preserved by the rod of force day after day, king, his subjects make the king grow greater; therefore the rod of
35 force is what is most important. It puts this world into a stable order quickly, king.

Law, which rests in the Real, is found among the brahmins. The brahmins are harnessed to Law, and the best of them are harnessed to the Vedas. The rites of sacrificial worship arose from the Vedas, and these rites please the Gods. When the Gods are pleased, they always give it* over to Indra, and Śakra,† showing kindness to these creatures,‡ gives them food. The life breath of all beings is ever based upon food: So it is that creatures stand upon a firm base,° and the rod of force keeps watch over them. To serve this purpose, the rod of punishment became the kṣatriya Order of society, and, judiciously decreed, it always stands watch over creatures without ever fading.
40 Lord, Person, Breath, Being, Substance, Progenitor, Embodied Soul, and Living Soul—it is called by these eight names. The rod of force gave him firm dominion. When joined with power§ it always consists of five sorts of things: families, bodily strength, wealth, ministers, and wisdom are declared to be forms of strength.

Another form of strength is extracted from the eight things, Yudhiṣṭhira: units of elephants, cavalry, chariot warriors, infantry, navy, workers, guides, and spies—military force is traditionally taught to have these eight

* What the pleased Gods give Indra is not specified; presumably it is the source of the food Indra then showers down upon creatures offering sacrifice.
† = Indra.
‡ Presumably, those offering sacrificial worship to the Gods; perhaps just "creatures here."
§ Text note: see endnote at 121.41c.

components. When that eightfold force is in action, it has elephants, elephant riders, men mounted on horses, foot soldiers, councillors,
45 physicians, mendicants, investigative judges, astrologers, diviners, treasury, allies, grain supply, and every kind of implement.

The rod of force is a limb of the kingdom, which they understand to be a body with seven basic elements and eight limbs.° The rod of force is its origin. Punishment, the essence of which is the same for all, was given by the Lord to the careful keeping of kṣatriyas. Indeed the rod of force is this everlasting world. There is nothing kings have that is more worthy of being honored, as it is what teaches the Laws.

It was sent forth by Brahmā for the protection of the world and for the establishing of people's proper duties.

> Likewise another judicial process developed that has its warrant from the king;° the punishment suffered from that process is characterized as having the king's warrant.°
>
> > But judicial process has the Vedas for its essence; it is said to have its warrant in the Vedas.
> >
> > Likewise, O tiger among men, there is another which is ancient, which is declared in the Learned Teachings.
>
> 50 And the punishment that has been said to be characterized by the king's warrant should not be understood as resting in a lord of men; it has the rod of force for its warrant.*
>
> And that punishment which is understood to have the rod of force for its warrant is taught in tradition to be the essence of judicial process. And what is taught in tradition as judicial process is the essence of the subject matter of the Vedas. The essence of what the Vedas bring forth is Law, which reveals excellence. When something that is warranted by Law has arisen,† it is regarded as being Law by those whose minds are sophisticated.

Brahmā has designated judicial process to be the protector of creatures, Yudhiṣṭhira; having the Real as its essence, and causing an increase of general welfare, it supports the three worlds.

The rod of force is understood to be the everlasting judicial process; the judicial process is understood to be Law, so we have learned. The Veda is Law, and Law is the way of the strictly observant.
55 Brahmā, the Progenitor, came to be first; he was the Grandfather. He

* = its (ultimate) warrant.
† That is, the punishment meted out by the king in those criminal processes instigated on the king's authority.

was the maker of all the worlds with their Gods, demons, Rākṣasas, men, and serpents—he was the maker of what came to be. Thus this judicial process of ours is characterized by its being warranted by the Lord.

Thus have we declared this description of judicial process.

Mother, father, brother, wife, and chaplain are not exempt from kings' punishments if they fail to stay within their proper Law.

Bhīṣma said:

122.1 On this° they recite this ancient account. We've heard that the brilliant Vasuhoma was the king of the Aṅgas. Always involved in performing Meritorious, Lawful Deeds and a great ascetic, that king went with his wife to Muñjapṛṣṭha, a place venerated by throngs of divine seers.

> He went to a place, a peak of the Snowy Mountains on golden Mount Meru, where, at Muñjavaṭa,° Rāma had commanded its seizure for those wearing the ascetics' coiled braids.* From then on, king, that place, called Muñjapṛṣṭha by seers of the strictest vows, was often visited by Rudra.†

5 Beloved by the brahmins, he lived there like a divine seer, ever endowed now with the many virtues recommended in Holy Learning.

Once upon a time, King Māndhātar, witherer of his enemies and a highly esteemed friend of Śakra,‡ came there, and he was in a cheerful mood. As Māndhātar drew near to King Vasuhoma, he saw that the other king was superior to him because of the other's asceticism. Māndhātar approached him humbly. Vasuhoma presented a cow to the king and the water given to guests, and then he asked Māndhātar if all was well in his eight-limbed kingdom. And he asked that king who followed exactly the ancient ways of the strictly pious, "What might I do for you?"

10 O joy of the Kurus, Māndhātar was supremely gratified, and he replied to that most excellent of kings, the very wise Vasuhoma, as he sat there, "You have studied the entire thought of Bṛhaspati, and likewise you have comprehended the Learned Teachings of Kāvya Uśanas, O lord of men. I wish to learn from you how the rod of force originated. Also, how did it first awaken? And why is it said to be supreme? How did the rod of force come to reside among kṣatriyas and get so firmly entrenched? You have such vast wisdom, tell me this and I shall give you a teacher's fee."

Vasuhoma said:

Learn, king, how the rod of force arose as the protection of the world, for the sake of guarding and disciplining creatures—it is the everlasting

15 essence of Law. We were taught that Brahmā, the blessed Grandfather of the World, desired to perform a rite of sacrificial worship, and saw no priest

* This incident is otherwise unknown and is unclear; see the second endnote at 122.3.
† = Śiva. ‡ = Indra.

who was his equal. The God then carried a fetus in his head for many, many years, and after a full thousand years had gone by, that fetus popped out when the God sneezed.* Thus, O tamer of enemies, the Progenitor Kṣupa came to be, and he was then the priest at that exalted one's rite of worship. When Brahmā's solemn rite had begun, O bull among the princes of the earth, the rod of force disappeared because Brahmā was present there in a happy form. After the rod of force disappeared, people became mixed up—people did not know what they should do and what not, what

20 they should eat and what not, what they should drink and what not, nor did they know how to assure the realization of their efforts. They did not know whom they could go with and whom not,† and one's own property and another's were the same. Lawlessness prevailed, and they harmed one another: They tore at each other like dogs fighting over a piece of meat, the strong killing the weak.

Then the Grandfather paid his respects to the everlasting blessed Viṣṇu and said to the Great God, the God who grants wishes, "You absolutely have to relieve the virtuous here. You must devise a way for there to be no confusion here." Then the Blessed One, wearing his hair in coiled braids and holding a lance, meditated for a long time. Eventually that most

25 excellent of the Gods himself created his own self as the rod of force. And from that rod he created the Policy of doing Lawful Deeds, namely the Goddess Sarasvatī. She is famous in the three worlds as the Policy for the Application of Force. The Blessed One then meditated again for a long time, holding a lance as the best of weapons, after which he made one and only one lord for this group and that. He made the God of a Thousand Eyes‡ the one lord of the Gods, and he made Yama Vaivasvata§ the lord of the Ancestors. Kubera he made the lord of riches and Rākṣasas, Meru he made the lord of mountains, Ocean he made the lord of Rivers. He ordained Lord Varuṇa to rule over the divine waters, Death to be lord of the breaths

30 of life, and Fire to be lord of all fiery energies. The lord ordained the exalted everlasting, wide-eyed Great God‖ to be the lord protector of the Rudras, Vasiṣṭha to be lord of seers, Fire to be lord of Vasus, the Sun to be lord of fiery energies, the Moon to be lord of astral bodies, Soma to be lord of plants, and the twelve-armed Kumāra to be king Skanda, the best lord of goblins; Time the humbler and destroyer that is lord of all, he made lord of fourfold Death and of pleasure and suffering.

But the lord of all the Rudras who assumes every body, who is the king of kings and the overlord of riches, is taught in Holy Learning to be "He

35 who holds the lance."°# He gave that one son, the later-born Kṣupa, to Brahmā, to be the overlord of creatures and the most excellent of those that support all Laws. The Great God then, when this rite of sacrificial

* = *kṣuvataḥ*. † = sexually. ‡ = Indra.
§ = the lord of the dead. ‖ = Śiva. # = Śiva.

worship had begun in accordance with the prescriptions, gave the well-honored rod of force, the protector of Law, to Viṣṇu; Viṣṇu gave it to Aṅgiras, the most excellent of sages; Aṅgiras gave it to Indra and Marīci; and Marīci gave it to Bhṛgu; Bhṛgu gave the rod of force together with Law to the seers; the seers gave it to the World-Guardians; the World-Guardians gave it to Kṣupa; Kṣupa gave it to Manu, the son of the Sun; Manu, the son of the Sun and the God of the Ancestor Rite, gave it, its essence being protection, to his sons to effect the subtle ends of Law.°

40 The rod of punishment is to be applied differentially and according to Law, not haphazardly: Punishment may be censure, imprisonment, gold, expulsion, severing a limb from the body, or execution. Banishment, death, and the various corporal afflictions should not be imposed for any trivial reason.

The rod of punishment remains awake, watching people, in this order: The blessed Indra watches, and after Indra the brilliantly radiant Fire, and after Fire, Varuṇa, then the Progenitor, then Law, which consists of discipline, watches. After Law is Intention, the everlasting son of Brahmā, 45 and after Intention, Fiery Energy remains awake, on guard. After Fiery Energy the plants stand watch, then the mountains, and after the mountains then water, and after water the Goddess Ruin, and after Ruin, the celestial lights; after the celestial lights stand the Vedas, then the lord Horse-head.* The Grandfather, the undecaying Lord Brahmā, stands watch after him, and the Blessed Great God Śiva after the Grandfather. The All-Gods after Śiva, the seers after the All-Gods, the Blessed Soma after the seers, the eternal Gods after Soma, and after the Gods the brahmins in the world stand watch. Learn this! After the brahmins the rulers guard the worlds by Law, and after the kṣatriyas comes the Everlasting that is 50 stationary and mobile. People are awake in this world, and the rod of force is awake among them. The rod of force, the destroyer of all, is a lord the equal of the Grandfather. Time watches at the beginning, in the middle, and at the end, Bhārata. The lord of all the world, the great God, the Progenitor, Śiva, the God of Gods, the Lord Śarva stands watch constantly—Kapardin, Śaṃkara, Rudra, Bhava, Sthāṇu, Husband of Umā.

So the rod of force has been completely explained in its beginning, its middle, and its end. The king who knows Law should work with it in the proper way.

Bhīṣma said:

The king who shall learn this thought of Vasuhoma and, having learned 55 it, act with it perfectly, gains his desires. So, bull among men, what the rod of force is has been explained to you completely—it is what checks all the people who transgress the Laws, Bhārata.

* = the Sun.

(84) The Laws for Kings (Continued)

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

123.1 Grandpa, I want to hear the settled conclusions about Law, Riches, and Love. All the movement in the world is based on these three things. What are the foundations of Law, Riches, and Love, and what is the origin of these three? They are connected to each other, and they also work one by one as well.

Bhīṣma said:

When people can be cheerful in spite of the certain fact of everyone's destruction, then it is that the three* are joined together in those people, who both begin and end in Time.° One's body is based upon one's Merit, and so too are one's Riches; Love is said to be the fruit of Riches. They are all grounded in one's wishes, and wishes essentially consist of objects 5 perceived by the senses. All the objects perceived by the senses, in their entirety, are for the procurement of food. This is the foundation of the Group of Three—withdrawing from them is the pursuit of Absolute Freedom. Lawful Merit is the guarantee for the body,† and Riches are desired for the sake of doing Lawful Deeds. Love has bliss as its result—all of them are replete with the impassioning dust.‡ One should pursue any of the three that are close to hand, and he should not reject any of them in his heart; anyone who has rejected the three that start with Law and end with Love is acting from the Attribute Darkness.

A man of vile understanding could not even think of acquiring in a whole day as much of these three goods as a man of excellent understanding could get in a moment.

Law has jealousy as its stain, Riches has concealment as its stain, and Love has excessive pleasure as its stain—when the particular quality of each is carried to an extreme.

10 On this they recite this ancient account of a conversation between Kāmanda and Aṅgāriṣṭha. One time King Aṅgāriṣṭha greeted the seer Kāmanda as he was seated, and he questioned him, observing the usual protocols.° "Seer, when a king has repented the evil he did under the compulsions of desire or confusion, what is there that can eliminate his evil? It has become commonplace in the world that people act with the false idea that what is Wrong is Right. How can a king put a stop to this?"

* = Law, Riches, and Love.

† The kind of body one will move to after one's current body dies depends upon one's Merit, one's having done dharma.

‡ = *rajasvala*, akin to, or the same as, the Sāṃkhya Attribute Energy.

Kāmanda said:

Someone who completely disregards Law and Riches and pursues only Love destroys his good judgment in this life by his abandoning of Law and Riches. And the confusion which destroys his judgment also destroys his Merit and his Riches, and from that arises Naysaying and wrongdoing. And when the king does not rein in those rotten evil-doers, people are upset at that, as if there were a snake in their house. His subjects will not follow that king, nor will the brahmins, nor the holy men, and so he comes to naught and deserves execution. Disgraced and despised, he lives a miserable life. When one who has been disgraced survives, it is death pure and simple.

On this subject the teachers say this is the extirpation of the evil: He should serve the Triple Learning* and treat the brahmins well. He should have a high opinion of Law, he should marry into one of the great families, he should serve those brahmins who are zealous but also tolerant.† Habitually performing the required ablutions,° he should recite prayers and litanies; he should be cheerful, and not have committed any other evil; he should have dealings only with those who are devoted to Law, shunning evil-doers. He should gratify them with sweet words and deeds; he should regularly recite the virtues of others and say, "So shall I be."

If his behavior is free of evil in these ways, he shall quickly become highly respected, and he shall nullify even his most dire evil deeds, no doubt of it.

Do that which your superiors‡ say is the highest Law, for you will gain the very highest good by the grace of your superiors.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

124.1 O most excellent of men, people on this earth always praise first of all the habitual virtue of doing Law. But I have a great doubt about this. O best of the supporters of Law, if I am capable of understanding this, I want to learn all of it, exactly as it is understood. How is habitual virtue acquired? I want to hear this, Bhārata. What are said to be its marks? Tell me this, O best of speakers.

Bhīṣma said:

O you who honor me, Duryodhana once expressed this to Dhṛtarāṣṭra some time back, when he, Duryodhana, was upset at having seen the riches that had come to you and your brothers at Indraprastha, great king, and because of the ridicule of him in your assembly hall.§ Listen to the whole thing, Bhārata. After he saw your assembly hall and your unexcelled opulence, Duryodhana sat and told his father all about it. When Dhṛtarāṣṭra heard all his son had to say, he said this to Duryodhana,

* = the Vedas.
† = pious brahmins willing to overlook his past.
‡ = *gurus:* parents, elders, teachers.
§ See *MBh* 2.32–50, in particular 2.43 ff; van Buitenen, 2: 109 ff..

who was with Karṇa. "Tell me, son, why are you really upset? I will then calm you down, if you are amenable to that. O conqueror of enemy cities, since you have come to be the general ruler, your brothers and all your friends and relatives do your bidding, and you wear fine clothes, you eat meat with your rice, the finest horses carry you, so why are you grieving, son?"

Duryodhana said:

O you who do me honor, I am upset because I saw those ten thousand exalted brahmin graduates eat on golden plates in Yudhiṣṭhira's palace. I am upset because I saw that divine assembly hall graced with celestial fruits and flowers, and dappled horses from the Tittiras, and various jewels. I am upset because I saw the splendid opulence of the sons of Pāṇḍu, my enemies—tremendously vast opulence like Indra's!

Dhṛtarāṣṭra said:

Son, if you want riches such as Yudhiṣṭhira has, or even better than his, then, my son, tiger among men, you must be habitually virtuous. The three worlds can be won by habitual virtue, no doubt of it. For those who are habitually virtuous, there is nothing in this world that cannot be done. Māndhātar took over the earth in one night, Janamejaya did it in three days, and King Nābhāga's son Ambarīṣa did it in seven nights. All these princes were habitually virtuous and self-controlled, and, purchased by their virtues, Earth approached these princes herself.

On this subject of virtue, Bhārata,* they recite this ancient account: It was the seer Nārada who told it some time ago. "Prahrāda seized the kingdom of the exalted Great Indra. The whole of the three worlds was subjugated by the Daitya who had betaken himself to habitual virtue. Then Śakra, his hands folded in respect, approached Bṛhaspati, and, being very wise, Indra said to the sage, 'I want to know what is best for me now.' The blessed Bṛhaspati then told the king of the Gods that the highest and most excellent thing was Knowledge, O you who bear the Kuru line onward. 'This is what is best,' Bṛhaspati told him. But Indra questioned him further, 'In whom would it be especially outstanding?'"

Bṛhaspati said:

The exalted Bhārgava† is extraordinarily endowed with it. Learn more of it there‡ from him. Blessings upon you, sacker of cities!

Dhṛtarāṣṭra said:

He of tremendous glory happily learned the Knowledge that was best for himself from the Bhārgava and thus regained his brilliant luster. Given leave to speak by the exalted Bhārgava, Śatakratu§ said to Śukra over and over again, "There is something better." The Bhārgava, who knew the Right thing that had to be done here,° then told Indra, "The exalted

* = Duryodhana. † = Śukra, Bṛhaspati's rival as an advisor.
‡ = among the Asuras, where Śukra dwells.
§ = Indra.

Prahrāda's knowledge is even better." Indra was thrilled at this. The Punisher of Pāka* then became a brahmin, and, after listening to Prahrāda,† that sharp-witted one said to him, "I want to know what is best for me." Prahrāda said to the brahmin, "O bull among brahmins, I am absorbed in governing the three worlds and have no time, so I will not instruct you." The brahmin then said, "When might there be time?
30 Whenever there is some break in your duties, I want to be taught." King Prahrāda was then pleased with that brahmin and he agreed. Later, at a good time, he gave him the essential Knowledge. That brahmin then scrupulously carried out the service he owed his teacher—service over which nothing takes precedence—and with all his heart he did whatever his teacher wanted as soon as he wished it in his mind.

Indra frequently questioned Prahrāda, "O tamer of your enemies, how did you acquire the rule of the three worlds?" "O you who know your Lawful Obligation,‡ tell me what is the reason for your success."

Prahrāda said:

O most excellent of brahmins, I am never resentful; I never say, "I am the king." I guide the wise sayings of those who advise me and ride along behind them.° These men feel free when they speak to me and always guide me, as I am very attached to their words of wisdom, eager to learn,
35 and not resentful; completely given to doing what is Right, my anger under control, I am restrained and I have restrained my senses. My directors gather them§ together, like bees do *kṣaudra* honey. I lick up the juices that are squeezed out at the tips of their tongues. I stand over my own kind as does the moon over the stars. The wisdom in the mouth of the brahmins is an immortal nectar upon the earth, an unexcelled eye; one goes forward after learning it.

Dhṛtarāṣṭra said:

Prahrāda said to the brahmin, "This‖ is what is best," and that one heeded him. Then the king of the Daityas said, "Blessings upon you! Since I am pleased with how you have served me, your teacher, O most excellent
40 of brahmins, make a wish. Without a doubt I will grant it." The brahmin then said to the king of the Daityas, "You've already granted one." But Prahrāda was pleased and said, "You must get a wish."

The brahmin said:

If, king, you are pleased with me, and if you want what is good for me, then I want your habit of virtue, sir. This is my wish.

Dhṛtarāṣṭra said:

The king of the Daityas was pleased with this. But then he was very frightened to think, "There is more than a little fierce energy in the wish

* = Indra. † Text note: see endnote at 124.27.
‡ To answer truthfully a question asked.
§ = their wise sayings.
‖ = kings' lapping up the nectar of brahmin guidance.

this brahmin has stipulated." Abashed, Prahrāda said then, "So it shall be," and he bestowed the wish upon the brahmin and was miserable.

45 After he had granted the wish and the brahmin had departed, Prahrāda suffered anxious doubts, great king,* and he could not resolve them. As he worried, O my son who shine so brilliantly, an embodiment of energy, a replica of him, separated itself from his body. Prahrāda questioned this very large body, "Who are you, sir?" And it answered him, "I am your virtue, and now that you have abandoned me, I am leaving. I shall now live—and none can blame me—in that excellent brahmin who came here as your pupil and was always scrupulous towards you." The apparition then disappeared and went over to Śakra, lord.

When this energy had gone, another body like it came out of Prahrāda's body, and Prahrāda asked, "Who are you, sir?" "Know me to be Law, Prahrāda. King of Daityas, I am going where that most excellent of
50 brahmins is. As virtue is now there, so will I be as well." Then, great king, another body seeming to blaze with fiery energy came out of the exalted Prahrāda's body. "Who are you, sir?" he was asked, and that tremendously brilliant one said, "I am truthfulness, O foremost of Asuras, and I am following Law." When this person had followed Law, another person then exited from Prahrāda. Questioned by the exalted king, he said, "Prahrāda, know me to be good conduct. Where truthfulness has gone there will I go." When that one had gone, a large, white form came out of his body, and, questioned, he said, "Know me to be might. Where good conduct has gone there will I go." He then went where good conduct had gone, O lord of men. Then a Goddess made all of light exited from his body. The king of the
55 Daityas questioned her, and she told him, "I am Royal Splendor. Bold man, you have been truly brave, and I have stayed with you happily. But now you have abandoned me, and I will go where might has gone." The exalted Prahrāda was afraid, and he questioned her again, "O you who dwell in the lotus, to whom are you going? You are a Goddess devoted to the truth, the Supreme Mistress of the world. I want to know the truth: Who was that excellent brahmin, really?"

Royal Splendor said:

The pious student whom you instructed was Śakra. He has taken from you your dominion over the three worlds. You conquered all those worlds through your virtue, O you who know your Lawful Obligations. After he
60 realized this, Great Indra took that virtue of yours, lord. Law, truthfulness, good conduct, might, and myself as well, we have virtue as our root, O king of great wisdom—always, no question about it.

Bhīṣma said:

Śrī then went, and they all were gone, Yudhiṣṭhira. Then Duryodhana spoke to his father again and said this. O joy of the Kurus, I want to know

* = Duryodhana.

the fundamental reality of virtue. Tell me the means for acquiring habitual virtue.

Dhṛtarāṣṭra said:

The means was included in what the exalted Prahrāda taught before. Hear in summary form the acquisition of virtue, lord of men. Benevolence toward all beings in deed, in thought, in speech, and doing favors and 65 making generous gifts—this is what is praised as virtue. One should never do a deliberate deed for himself that is not beneficial to others, or that he would be ashamed of. One should do those deeds for which one would be praised in public.

So you've been given a brief summary of virtue, most excellent of the Kurus. And, king, if any kings lacking virtue should acquire the Goddess Royal Splendor, they will not enjoy her long, son; they and those who depend upon them will fall. Understand this truly and be habitually virtuous, son, if you desire Splendor more excellent than Yudhiṣṭhira's.

Bhīṣma said:

Dhṛtarāṣṭra told this to his son, king. Do this yourself, son of Kuntī, and then you will get its fruit.

(84p) The Song of the Seer Ṛṣabha

12.125–26 (B. 125–28; C. 4622–4715)

125 (125–26; 4622). Yudhiṣṭhira laments formerly having his hopes for Duryodhana's honesty shattered. He is impressed with hope's vastness and with the difficulty of getting hold of it (1–5). Bhīṣma tells him the story of the king-seer Sumitra. Hunting once, the king wounded a deer and pursued it swiftly when it ran away. The deer deliberately toyed with the king and eventually led him near an ascetic retreat deep in the forest (5–20). The king stopped there, exhausted and disappointed, and was received by the seers. Saying that his disappointment was bitter because hope is so vast, the king asked them about the difficulty of controlling hope (20–30).

126 (127–28; 4660). The leader of those seers, Ṛṣabha, Bull, answered, telling the king of an earlier visit to the retreat of Nara and Nārāyaṇa at Badarī. In a retreat near there he saw a tall, incredibly skinny ascetic named Skinny, whose body was no wider than one's little finger (1–10). Then King Manly Force came by, looking for his lost son, Tremendous Force. Ṛṣabha had listened as Skinny (whose own hopes had once been frustrated by this very king, and who had become an ascetic to shrink his hopes away) lectured King Manly Force on the ignominy and pain of frustrated hope (10–40). The king pleaded again to find his son, and Skinny produced the boy. He then revealed that he was Dharma and went off into the woods. Ṛṣabha exhorted Sumitra to get rid of his own slim hopes right away, and he did (40–45). Bhīṣma exhorts Yudhiṣṭhira to be steady as a mountain toward those who are miserable because they seek something (45–50).

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

125.1 Grandfather, you have said virtuous habits are the principal thing for a man. How does hope arise, and what is it?° Tell me that. This great question has arisen in me, Grandfather, O conqueror of enemy cities, and none but you can resolve it. Grandfather, I had great hope for Suyodhana,* lord, that when war was at hand he would do what was right.† Huge is the hope born in every man, and when his hope is shattered, the misery he 5 feels is death, no doubt of it. But I was stupid, and the villainous son of Dhṛtarāṣṭra dashed my hopes. Lord of kings, look at my stupidity. I think hope is bigger than a mountain topped with trees, or even taller than the sky! Or, rather, it is infinite! O best of the Kurus, it is difficult to understand, and it is very hard to get hold of it.° And as to being hard to get hold of,° where do I see anything more difficult to get hold of than it?

Bhīṣma said:

On this, Yudhiṣṭhira, I will tell you the history of what transpired between Sumitra and Ṛṣabha. Pay attention to it. Among the Haihayas there was a king-seer named Sumitra. He went hunting and chased after 10 a deer he had shot with a an arrow that had a bent shaft. That deer had unlimited courage, and it ran even after it was hit by the arrow. The mighty king swiftly pursued the deer, close upon it. The swift deer ran across a hollow, but in a moment, O lord of kings, he was on a level course again. Armed with bow and sword, full of the innate strength of his youth, the king pursued as swiftly as a goose. Fording male and female rivers, crossing ponds and passing through woods, he pursued that deer and entered into a woods. Just for fun the deer would let the king get closer and closer, and then the swift one would race on again with a great burst of 15 speed. The deer was shot with many of his arrows, O lord of kings, but repeatedly it would come close to the king, as if playing with him. That swift chieftain of the deer would then pick up speed again, go way out ahead, and then come back close to the king again. Sumitra, witherer of his enemies, then took out his best and most terrible arrow, one to deliver

* = Duryodhana.

† Yudhiṣṭhira refers to the negotiations with Duryodhana narrated in Book 5 of the *Mahābhārata, The Book of the Effort;* see van Buitenen, vol. 3.

a fatal wound, and he shot that arrow from his bow. That chieftain among chieftains of the deer eluded that arrow's path by the width of a cow pasture, and then he stood there as if laughing at the king. When that dazzling arrow hit the ground, the deer ran into a great forest, and the king ran after him.

20 Having entered into the great forest, the king arrived at the retreat of some ascetics. Exhausted, he sat down. When they saw that tired and hungry bowman there, those seers gathered together and paid their respects to him in the prescribed manner. The seers asked that tiger of a king what his purpose was. "Kind sir,° lord of men, to what end have you come to this ascetic grove as a soldier with a sword strapped on and armed with a bow and arrows? We would like to understand this. Why have you come here, O you who do us honor? In what family were you born? What is your name, tell us."

O Bhārata, bull among men, the king then rightly told all those 25 brahmins these things, and he told them of his chase. "I was born in the family of the Haihayas, Sumitra, son of Mitra. I am hunting the deer herds, assailing them with thousands of arrows. I am protected by a large army, and my advisors and my wives are with me. But one deer which I've shot with arrows runs away with my arrows in him. I have come to this forest by chance while following the running deer. And now I am before you good men, my Royal Splendor gone, my hopes dashed, faint with fatigue. What could be more miserable than this, that I should arrive at the retreat of you good men faint with fatigue, my hopes dashed, the marks of who I am gone? Losing the marks of a king does not pain me so sharply as having my hopes dashed, nor would losing my city, O you whose riches are your asceticism. Neither the great Snowy Mountains nor that great body of water the ocean have been surveyed because they are so vast; nor has the space between heaven and earth. Likewise, O you who are most excellent in asceticism, I have never come to the end of hope.

30 "All this is known to you good men, for you, with ascetic riches, are omniscient. You good men are highly blessed, so I will ask you something I am not sure of. In this world, which one seems to you more vast, a man full of hope or the sky? I want to learn this as it really is. And which one is harder to get hold of? O you who are ever engaged in asceticism, if this is not a secret of yours, tell me here and now. But I certainly do not want to learn anything secret about it, you bulls among brahmins. I withdraw the question I've raised if it would interfere with your asceticism, good men, if it's one that leads to long discussions and stories. I want to learn the basic truth about the totality of factors that cause this.* You good men ever engaged in asceticism really should be able, all of you together, to tell me this."

* = hope, expectation.

Bhīṣma said:

126.1 Then the most excellent one of those assembled seers, the brahmin seer named Ṛṣabha, spoke, smiling a little bit. "O tiger among kings, some time back, while I was making pilgrimage from one holy bathing shrine to another, I arrived at the celestial retreat of Nara and Nārāyaṇa, where the lovely *badarī* tree is,* and the aerial lake, and where Horse-head°† recites the everlasting Vedas. After first offering refreshment to the Ancestors 5 and the Gods at this lake, I went to the retreat where the seers Nara and Nārāyaṇa always stay. I went to some retreat not far away from there for my dwelling. I then saw an emaciated seer coming towards me; he was wearing rags and an antelope skin, and he was extremely tall. He was an ascetic named Skinny.° He had the eight bodily attributes other men have, O strong armed king who are a seer, but nowhere have I seen such skinniness. O king of kings, his body was the width of one's little finger! His neck, his arms, his feet, and his hair were a marvel to behold. His head befit his body, and so did his ears and his eyes. And his speech and his 10 movements were the same, O most excellent of kings. When I saw this skinny sage, I was shocked and extremely disconcerted. I greeted him by bowing down to his feet and then stood there before him, my hands folded in respect. I told him my name, my *gotra*, and who my father was, O bull among men, and I sat down in silence on a seat he pointed out. Then, great king, amidst those seers, Skinny, the best of the supporters of Meritorious Deeds, told stories bearing upon Law and Profit.

"While he was telling his stories, a king came by on swift horses with his army and his wives. His eyes like blue lotuses, he was extremely disconcerted, as he was brooding over his son who had disappeared in the forest. He was a very famous and illustrious scion of Raghu and the wise 15 father of Bhūridyumna. The king had previously been wandering in this forest, compelled by his hope: 'Here I will see the boy.' 'Now I will see the boy here.' But now he was saying repeatedly, 'It is unlikely that I will see my supremely virtuous boy now. A boy all alone in the great forest, he has perished!' And, 'It is unlikely that I will see him, but my hopes are very high. My whole body courses with expectation, and I am on the point of dying, no doubt of it.'

"When‡ the blessed seer Skinny, that very best of sages, had heard this he bent his head down, went into a trance, and stayed there for a while. The king was extremely disconcerted when he saw the seer in a trance, 20 and, depressed, he said very, very slowly over and over, 'O brahmin seer, is

* *Zizyphus jujuba* Lam., the jujube-fruit tree, which gives its name to this bathing shrine and to the famous *āśrama* of Nara and Nārāyaṇa.

† = Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa.

‡ The *ślokas* translated in this paragraph and the next (18–22; perhaps including some earlier ones as well) seem to interrupt the narrative, which, after 23, seems unaware of the seer's having lapsed into a trance and relates some of this matter in 26 ff.

it so unlikely? Can it come just from hope? Tell me this, blessed one, if it is not a secret.'

"Once in the past the great seer, the blessed one, had been insulted by this king. The seer had assumed a foolish attitude (because his fate was bad). He asked for a golden water jug and some bark strips for clothing. Disappointed, the brahmin seer ended up losing all hope.

"When he had said this, and after he had properly greeted that seer whom the whole world honored, that king ever mindful of Law was exhausted, and he sank down in depression, just like you, O best of men.* The great seer† had the water for guests brought out and the water for washing his feet, and he presented everything to the king according to the

25 rule followed in the forests. Then all those seers sat down around that bull among men, paying him honor, the way the stars of the seven seers‡ honor the pole star. They questioned that never-defeated king about the whole of his purpose in entering the retreat."

The king said:

I am a king known on every quarter of the horizon by the name of Manly Force.§ I have come to the forest to find my lost son Tremendous Force.‖ O foremost of brahmins, he was my only son, and he was just a boy, faultless one. Since I have not spotted him yet in this forest, I am roving around in search of him.

Ṛṣabha said:

When the king had said this the hermit hung his head and remained

30 silent, not answering the king. That brahmin had earlier been slighted by this king and so, lord of kings, he had undertaken long-lasting ascetic practices to shrink his hopes. He had then formed the resolve, "I will receive nothing whatsoever from kings, nor from the other social Orders. For when a man has hope it makes him prattle like a child. I shall expel it!" Having resolved this, he had abided by it.

The king said:

Can hope be made to shrink?# Is there anything in this world that is harder to accomplish? Tell me this, blessed one, for you understand Law and Profit.

Ṛṣabha said:

After recollecting everything,** the blessed brahmin Skinny of the

35 shrunken body spoke to the king, reminding him of it. "King, with regard to the shrinking of things,° there isn't anything that is the equal of hope. But, because it is so very difficult to accomplish I myself have petitioned many kings."

* Ṛṣabha is addressing Sumitra. † = Skinny.
‡ = the Big Dipper, Ursa Major. § = Vīradyumna. ‖ = Bhūridyumna.
King Sumitra questions Ṛṣabha after hearing of Skinny's past train of thought.
** = his past encounter with this king.

The king said:

I have understood both shrinking and nonshrinking, brahmin, and the difficulty of doing it, from what you say, which is like a statement of the Veda, brahmin. But now, you who are so very wise, a great doubt arises in my heart. You should tell me truly what I now ask you, excellency. Is there really anything more shrunken than you, blessed one, tell me this, if it is not a secret of yours, brahmin. Could anything have been more difficult to accomplish in this world?*

He with the shrunken body said:

A petitioner who would be satisfied is harder to find, or does not even exist. Even more difficult to find, son, is one who does not despise the petitioner.

40 When someone has promised to help but does not do the best he is able, or does not give help as the other deserves, the hope that would remain in anyone then is more shrunken, is slimmer, than I am.

When some father with just one son does not know what to do when that boy is lost or has gone abroad, the hope he has is slimmer than I am.

The hope of bearing a child that children occasion in old women, or in wealthy people without children,° is a hope that is slimmer than I am.

Ṛṣabha said:

After he heard this, that king and his wives prostrated themselves, and the king put his head to the feet of that bull among brahmins.

The king said:

I plead with you, blessed one, I want to meet with my son. Choose a boon, brahmin, whatever you want that accords with the rules.

Ṛṣabha said:

45 His eyes like blue lotuses, that king made this statement: "What you have said, brahmin, is true; there is nothing false in it."†

Then the blessed Skinny, the best of those who support Law, laughed and brought the boy right there through the power of his asceticism and learning. Then, after he had brought that boy there and scolded the king, that best of those who support Law showed himself to be Dharma in person. Having displayed himself in his wondrous, divine form, he, free of evil, his anger gone, went off a little way into the forest.

I saw this myself, king, and I heard that discussion.° So expel this hope right away,° which is even slimmer than he was.

* Than the extraordinary reduction of the sage's body.
† Here the king seems to accept the sage's claims about the disappointment of hopes.

Bhīṣma said:

50 Great king, when King Sumitra was told this by the exalted Ṛṣabha, he immediately expelled his very slim hope. You too, son of Kuntī, having heard these words of mine, must be as immovable as the Snowy Mountain, the highest of mountains. For you will see and you will hear those that are miserable because of what they seek. Having listened to me, great king, you ought not to grieve.

(84) The Laws for Kings (Continued)

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

127.1 I do not get enough of this nectar as you speak, grandfather, so tell me more about Law.

Bhīṣma said:

On this they recite the ancient account of a conversation between Gautama and the exalted Yama.* Gautama's large hermitage was in the Pāriyātra mountains. Gautama lived there at that time. Listen to me now.

5 Gautama performed asceticism for sixty thousand years. The Guardian of the World, Yama, then came up to that sage, who was highly refined as a result of his asceticism, while the sage was engaged in a harrowing ascetic observance. Yama gazed upon Gautama the sage as the seer did his extreme asceticism. When the brahmin seer realized that Yama had come there because of his† power, the ascetic, his hands folded in respect, put himself humbly at Yama's disposal and crept toward him. After the King of the Law‡ had looked upon him and greeted that bull among men respectfully, he prompted him, saying, "What shall I, Dharma,° do for you?"

Gautama said:

What does one do to acquit oneself of what he owes his mother and his father? How does a man enjoy the heavenly worlds that are very nice but so hard to get?

Yama said:

Devoted to Truth and Law, cleansed by ascetic observances, one should

10 directly honor one's mother and father day by day. A man must worship the Gods with many Horse Sacrifices replete with opulent presents for the priests, and then he will enjoy heavenly worlds of marvelous form.

* = the Lord of the Dead. † = Gautama's. ‡ = Yama.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

128.1 O Bhārata, what course is there for a king whose allies have forsaken him, who has many enemies, whose treasury is completely exhausted, whose army is inferior, whose aides and ministers are corrupt, whose secrets have been spilled in every direction; whose rule is slipping from his grasp while he sees no other course; who has been attacked by a circle of enemy states that is strong while he is weak; whose country is in disarray, who does not understand place and time; for whom conciliation of his enemies is impractical, and dividing them too, because he is pressed too hard; for whom life too is untenable because of his practical situation? What would best be done in this case?

Bhīṣma said:

5 O bull of the Bharatas, do not question me too much about Law that is obscure.° Were I not asked about it, I could not bear to speak about this Law, Yudhiṣṭhira.

Law is more subtle than speech, O bull of the Bharatas, and more subtle than thought. One who has waited upon those of strictly righteous behavior, and learned from them, somehow becomes an upright man himself. Doing deeds guided only by one's intelligence, one becomes rich, or he does not. You must resolve this sort of extra question yourself by your own lights.

Listen, Bhārata, to a way to survive that accords with Law in many ways. I do not esteem anything like this as Law because it makes Merit.* Rich people may take misery upon themselves,† and afterwards this may be regarded as a suitable thing to have done. With every course of action, there can be a conclusive evaluation of it only after one has traversed it.°‡ Whatever Learned Tradition a man regularly consults,° that is what he

10 understands, and that understanding pleases him. A way of acting may seem unsuitable to a man because he lacks a full understanding of it; but the way that seems unsuitable because of a lack of understanding may actually produce well-being.

Listen to this without questioning what I say, and without resenting any of it.

When the king's treasury runs down, his army dwindles away. The king should make his treasury multiply fruitfully, the way one uses water in arid tracts. Doing this is what is Law for now; when the time is right, then he should be kind. The ancients conducted themselves by taking up these expedient Laws. Bhārata, there is one Law for those who are fully able and another Law for those who are in difficult straits.

* Bhīṣma appears to say he acknowledges such actions as dharma only because they are expedient.

† As a temporary expedient.

‡ = the particular course of action; it can be evaluated only after its results are known.

Law is said to need treasure first of all. Intelligence is more important than Law. And he who is not very strong does not find proper sustenance just by adhering to Law.

15 Since the production of wealth is not all that occurs,°* tradition teaches that during times of distress even what is Unlawful can have the attributes of Law. The sages know when it is that Lawless Wrong is what is actually produced. You suspect it is unavoidable for the kṣatriya.

They say one must act in this life in such a way that his Meritorious Deeds do not ebb away, in such a way that he does not end up in the control of his enemy. One must not cause his own ruin. A ruined man can accomplish no Lawful Deed, nor do anything for himself or any other. He should try to save himself by any and all means, that is clear. The clear indication for this, son, is in the keen understanding of Law on the part of those who know Law.° Thus says Holy Learning:

> There is exertion and survival in the *kṣatra*, from the power of their strong arms.

20 Upon the complete shutting off of all sustenance, Bhārata, from whom should the kṣatriya not take wealth, apart from the property of ascetics and brahmins?† As a brahmin who is sinking into ruin may officiate at the sacrificial worship even of someone forbidden to offer sacrifices,° and may eat even forbidden foods, so this is permissible, no doubt of it.

> What is not a proper exit for someone hard pressed?° What is a wrong path for one whose desire is extinguished?‡° A man hard pressed escapes, but not through the door.

"The life of begging is not ordained,° nor is living the life of a vaiśya or a śūdra, even for a ruler who has been humiliated before the whole world by the mastering of his army and his treasury."

If one cannot survive upon any other way of life,° then whatever way of life he does use to survive is consistent with his particular Lawful Duty; if one submits to the primary form of the Law, he may subsist by

25 its secondary form. One who is in distress may live by what is not in accordance with the Laws. Indeed this is seen even among brahmins, when their proper livelihood has dried up. So what doubt could there be for a kṣatriya? Thus is it always decided. He should take it from those that have more than he; he should never, not ever, sink into ruin.

They understand the kṣatriya to be the killer and the protector of creatures; therefore, expropriation is to be done by one who is a member of

* There is also the expenditure and loss of wealth.
† Seemingly a rhetorical question in the mouth of Bhīṣma.
‡ Text note: see the second endnote at 128.22.

the kṣatriyas who is protecting. King, no one in this world has a livelihood without doing harm, not even the sage who wanders by himself and lives off of the wilderness.° No one is able to live without doing harm, not even by taking up a faultless way of life;° and especially, most excellent of the Kurus, no one who tries to protect creatures.

30 In a time of distress, the king and the country must always mutually preserve each other in this world—this is the everlasting Law. As the king preserves the country with floods of material goods during times of distress, so the country should preserve the king during a crisis.

In a country plagued by famine the king should never conceal his treasury,° nor punishment, nor the army, nor his allies, nor anything else he has accumulated. Those who know the Laws realize that seeds must be secured from one's food. They say this is an illustration of this matter given by Śambara,* who had great powers of illusion.

Cursed be the life of that king, in whose country men sink into ruin, their lives at an end for want of sustenance, while he knows the discourses of Śibi!°

35 The king's base is his treasury and his army, and the treasury is the base of the army. That† is the base of all Lawful Deeds, and Lawful Deeds are the base of the king's people.

A treasury cannot be gathered without tormenting others in this world. How could an army be? The king would acquire no guilt for causing torment for these purposes.

When something which should not be done is done in the course of rites of sacrificial worship for the sake of those rites, then the king would acquire no guilt because of it.

One type of action is what is done for the sake of a good object, another type is to counter what is opposed,‡ and another is what is done for the sake of an evil object—that is a complete characterization of purposes. Thus may a sharp-witted king use his intelligence well to make a decisive judgment of what should be done.

One type is what is done for the sake of the sacrificial rite, another is that which has no purpose in the sacrifice, and another is what is done for the sake of an object in the rite—all that is toward the realization of a sacrificial rite.

40 I will state a comparison that will illuminate the basic reality of Lawful Deeds. They cut down the slaughter-post used in the rite for the sake of the rite. There are some trees nearby that hinder that task, and certainly they cut them down too; and these too, falling, knock other trees down. Similarly, O scorcher of your foes, I see no success in accumulating a great treasury here without killing those men who would obstruct it.

* = Asura ruler killed by Indra who is quoted elsewhere in the *MBh* on the subject of poverty and starvation; see 5.70.22 and 132.12.
† = the treasury. ‡ = opposed to a good object.

One conquers both worlds with wealth, this one and the next. True is it said about Law that it does not exist without wealth. By any and all means he should expropriate wealth for the sake of the rites of sacrificial worship. In doing so he would not have equal guilt for doing things that are
45 required as for doing things that are not required, Bhārata. These two* do not just come to exist on their own, not at all, Bhārata. Nowhere in the wilds do I see any who have increased their wealth.

A man desires, "Whatever wealth there is to be seen here on this earth in this world, let it be mine! Let it be mine!"

There is no Law at all that is equal to ruling a kingdom, O scorcher of your enemies. And beyond this they recommend the Law of kings that is for times of distress.

Some pile up heaps of wealth through generous gifts, or by rites, while others, ascetics, do so through asceticism, and others through intelligence and industriousness.

They say a poor king is weak; he becomes mighty through riches. He who has wealth can have everything; he who has a treasury escapes everything. From the treasury come Lawful Deeds, and Love, the next world, and this one too.

12(85) Law in Times of Distress

12.129–67 (B. 131–73; C. 4779–6456)
129 (131; 4779). Yudhiṣṭhira asks what a king in dire straits should do in the face of a strong enemy. Bhīṣma counsels making peace with a threatening enemy, giving up territory if necessary, or even fleeing. A king should avoid being captured at all costs (1–5). Yudhiṣṭhira repeats the essence of his question. Bhīṣma counsels war that should be followed by the king's cultivating good will among his subjects; retreat is also possible (10).
130 (132; 4793). Yudhiṣṭhira asks how, short of renouncing the world, a brahmin can live in degraded times. Bhīṣma praises what he calls "the power of discernment" in such circumstances (1) and then advises Yudhiṣṭhira on handling various sensitive issues that arise when brahmin behavior may be scandalous. First, he declares that the king should view everything in the world as being for the sake of piously observant people (1–5). Next he argues that wise brahmins

* = this world and the next.

who are tough-minded may live amid reprehensible people and remain pure by virtue of "careful discernment" of Law. Brahmins are society's standard for Law and should never be crossed (5–10). Bhīṣma cautions Yudhiṣṭhira against acting on the basis of the vicious rumors common in society, and he condemns all such slanderous talk (10). In judicial matters the king should proceed slowly and steadily. Some argue that brahmin behavior itself is the self-validating standard of Law for them, and others say the king has the responsibility to punish wrongdoing brahmins. Some recommend merely exiling corrupt brahmins, a mild treatment not afforded to others. On the other hand, confiscating their property on the basis of false pretenses is a serious wrong (10–15). The king commits himself to the Norm that is both esteemed by the pious and satisfies his own heart. Law is difficult to discern, and it must be tracked carefully (15–20).
131 (133; 4815). Bhīṣma continues, arguing the general importance of riches and the king's treasury (1–5). A king should never surrender, even resorting to the use of jungle barbarians to raise an army (5–10). He should establish law among the barbarians, for barbarians endowed with law are loyal (10–15). When campaigning against barbarians, he should never eradicate them without remnant (15).
132 (134; 4835). Bhīṣma reports a statement of experts on the past to the effect that though the workings of Law are obscure, the wise king never separates Law and Riches. Bhīṣma then elaborates upon the need for Law in spite of the benefits of worldly power alone. Law quells the anxieties of the powerful and can cleanse their past evils (1–10). Bhīṣma gives a general description of how the king escapes his past evil, principally by piously attending to the Vedas and the brahmins (10–15).
133 (135; 4852). The Story of Kāpavya, a Barbarian Who Achieved Perfection. *Kāpavya was a wise and heroic ruler of the Niṣādas. He was devoted to brahmin religion and to Law. He was a great leader and warrior who took good care of his aged, blind parents (1–5). The barbarians chose him to be their leader, and he accepted, laying down various laws they should observe, such as not killing ascetics, nor noncombatants, nor women; not taking women by force; supporting and defending cows and brahmins; and instituting punishment. He promised them that even barbarians who lived by the learned teachings on Law would attain perfection*

(5–20). The barbarians quit their evil ways as a result of Kāpavya's leadership (20–25).

134 (136; 4878). Bhīṣma recites some gāthās *sung by Brahmā on the nature of royal treasure. These verses develop the consistent theme that the role and duty of the king is to extract wealth from barbarians and nonbarbarians who do not perform the rites of sacrificial worship and make that "useless substance" useful. "Royal treasure"* (kośa) *is wealth taken from those humble origins and given to those who do perform rituals, or used instead to protect ritualists through the use of force (1–10).*

135 (137; 4890). Bhīṣma launches into a story about three fish that illustrates the virtue of looking ahead. Three fish facing capture as their pond is drained respond in three different ways: One acts immediately to remove himself from danger; a second agrees with the action of the first but waits too long to act and dies; a third waits until the danger is upon him, acts boldly, and just manages to save himself. Bhīṣma commends the first fish, who was far-sighted (1–15). Bhīṣma elaborates briefly upon the ideas of time and place and the importance of anticipation (20).

136 (138; 4913). Yudhiṣṭhira asks to hear how a king surrounded by his enemies can avoid going wrong. How can he recognize who are truly his friends? How should he act when he is weak (1–10)? Bhīṣma counsels the necessity of a king's allying himself with his enemies sometimes, and sometimes alienating his friends in the interest of gaining his ends (10–15). He relates The Conversation between a Cat and a Mouse below a Banyan Tree. *Beneath a tremendously large banyan tree full of birds there lived a mouse named Old Gray, and a cat named Hairy lived in its branches. A trapper set snares at the tree every night, and once Hairy got caught (15–25). The mouse was delighted to see the cat trapped, and he frolicked about until he noticed another enemy, a mongoose named Tawny, nearby, and then another, an owl called Moonshine. Frightened, the mouse worried what to do and decided his best bet was to use the cat as his ally (25–45). The mouse made a speech to the cat that argued for their cooperation in saving each other (45–60). The cat made a similar speech, urging the mouse to act immediately to free him (60–65). The mouse proposed snuggling up to the cat to be safe from the mongoose and the owl, and he promised to gnaw through the cat's bonds. The cat welcomed the mouse, and the mouse curled up and slept next to the cat. The mongoose and the owl left. The mouse then slowly gnawed at the cords of the snare (70–80). The cat tried to hurry the mouse to cut the cords before the trapper returned, but the mouse pointed out that the cat would be a great threat to him, if he were to cut the snare too soon. He promised to finish the job as soon as he saw the trapper approaching. They argued the issue through the night (80–105). The trapper, an ugly Caṇḍāla, appeared at dawn, knife in hand, and the mouse then finished gnawing the cord. The cat rushed up the tree in terror and the mouse dove into his hole (110–15). The trapper left and the cat began trying to persuade the mouse that they were now true friends, that he presented no danger to the mouse (115–25). The mouse responded with a long lecture on self-interest and cooperation, arguing that one does not have permanent friends nor permanent enemies. He suggested the cat was now being deceitful. He and the cat had been friends for a limited purpose, but now they were enemies again—the cat was hungry, and the mouse was his food (125–165). The mouse bid the cat good-bye. He offered to do him any favor except give himself over to the cat. He lectured the cat further (165–75). The cat answered the mouse, renewing his friendly overtures (175–80). The mouse lectured the cat again, arguing that distrust is the best overall policy in practical affairs. The mouse mentioned the cat's need to distrust the trapper, and the cat fled to his den in terror (180–190). Bhīṣma recapitulates the lessons of the story in terms of wisdom and vigilance, and he counsels Yudhiṣṭhira to apply them as he rules (190–210).*

137 (139; 5133). Yudhiṣṭhira asks how a king can possibly be successful without trusting anyone (1). Bhīṣma relates The Conversation between the Bird "Adorable" and King Brahmadatta. *A bird named "Adorable" lived for many years in the harem of King Brahmadatta's palace in Kāmpilya. She gave birth to a son when the queen did. One day the boy and the bird were playing, and Adorable gave them each a piece of an especially sweet fruit. The fruit made the prince very aggressive, and he killed the young bird. Adorable wailed in grief, excoriating kṣatriyas for their viciousness and deceit; then she put out the prince's eyes (5–15). Expecting the king to take vengeance upon her, Adorable resolved to leave the palace. But the king told her that he and she were even, and he urged her to stay (15–20). They debated the question of whether she now could trust the king to regard the matter as finished. She said she could not, that the king would always be*

hostile, even if he said otherwise (20–30). The king replied, saying enmity can come to an end, and they argued that point back and forth (30–40). The king argued that Time, not personal agents, determines what happens. The bird rebuts his assigning responsibility to Time (45–50). Adorable speaks of the roots of suffering and excoriates the king for his naïveté (55–60). The bird repeated her contention that their enmity would never die out (60–70). King Brahmadatta objected that trust of others is necessary to accomplish anything. Adorable countered that the wise are bold and self-reliant, and avoid bad judgments that make their bad situations fatal (70–80). Saying again that she was leaving because what his son did was not acceptable, the bird justified departure from bad kingdoms. She went on to list many defects and virtues of kings (85–105). The bird then left Brahmadatta's kingdom (105).

138 (140; 5247). Yudhiṣṭhira asks how one can hold firm while Law shrinks and barbarians oppress the world. Bhīṣma says he will present policy for bad times and begins the account of The Conversation between the Seer Bharadvāja and King Śatrumtapa. *Śatrumtapa asked how a king should make acquisitions and hold them (1–5). The seer Kaṇiṅka then lectured the king on the policies of rulers. First he emphasized the king's wielding the rod of punishment (5–10). Next he recommended savvy and flexible dealings with others (10–15). Next he gave numerous disconnected pieces of practical advice that turn upon being energetic, thorough, distrustful, duplicitous, manipulative, opportunistic, and ruthless. A number of these recommendations involve comparisons to the behavior of animals (20–70).*

139 (141; 5319). Describing great confusion and decadence, Yudhiṣṭhira asks how one might live in bad times without abandoning his family (1–5). After listing basic factors that condition kings (different endemic circumstances, the different ages of the world), Bhīṣma says that in decadent times one must exercise his powers of analytic understanding. He then tells the story of The Conversation between the Seer Viśvāmitra and a Caṇḍāla in the Barbarian's Hamlet. *Once, in the twilight between the Tretā and Dvāpara Ages there was a terrible, twelve-year drought that dried up the earth, killed most of its people, and put a halt to rites, agriculture, and trade (5–25). Like many other seers who had abandoned their hermitages, the seer Viśvāmitra ran hither and thither in search of food. His wanderings brought him to a repulsive hamlet of dog-eating Caṇḍālas (briefly described) (25–30). At first he found no food in the hamlet, but then he saw a dog's carcass hanging from a rope in a Caṇḍāla's hut. He reasoned that it would not be theft for him to take the property of a lower person during such a crisis, and he resolved to take the meat (30–35). In the middle of the night he entered the hut to take the meat, but he woke the Caṇḍāla, who then challenged him. Viśvāmitra told the Caṇḍāla who he was, and the barbarian honored the brahmin. The brahmin told the Caṇḍāla of his plight and his intention to take and eat the dog's haunch that was suspended there, excusing his breach of Law by citing the example of Fire, a brahmin who eats everything (40–50). The Caṇḍāla tried to dissuade the brahmin, arguing that he would ruin the Merit of his asceticism, that he would be mixing different Laws. The brahmin insisted that survival took precedence over forbidden foods, that he could purify himself later if he survived. They argued back and forth many times, with the Caṇḍāla quoting Law to the brahmin and urging him to accept death by starvation. The brahmin answered, arguing that the dog was the equivalent of a deer, that he would be supporting a brahmin, that such a deed could not affect his soul, that it would not be a very serious wrong, and so on (50–85). Viśvāmitra then ate the dog meat and went into the forest with his wife. Then Indra rained and revived the earth. Viśvāmitra purified himself and attained perfection after a long time. Bhīṣma endorses Viśvāmitra's reasoning and his actions (85–90).*

140 (142; 5421). Yudhiṣṭhira expresses horror at Viśvāmitra's action (1). Bhīṣma makes the point that the understanding of Law the king needs comes from several different sources, not from tradition alone (1–5). Bhīṣma expresses impatience that wisdom in understanding Law has not already been taught for the less able. He praises the importance of wisdom, recommending discrimination and dialectics in appropriating the normative teachings (5–10). Next Bhīṣma delivers a strong diatribe against overly narrow and hypocritical orthodox expounders of Law. "Wicked opponents of Law," these men try to live upon their learning while effectively making the learned traditions objects of scorn by their own harshness and lack of a sense of practical application (10–15). After stating both absolutist and skeptical positions on the teaching of Law, Bhīṣma says the Learned Traditions of Law cannot be studied by individuals

working from texts alone. The application of Law requires a living teaching and discussion (15–20). Yudhiṣṭhira was created for terrible deeds, and he should take this complex understanding of policy (by which Viśvāmitra and other hardy beings have managed to survive) and make use of it to prosper himself and others (20–25). Failing to kill one who deserves death is as wrong as killing one who does not deserve it. Such enforcement of Law distinguishes proper kṣatriya-governed kingdoms from the vicious chaos of barbarian realms. Yudhiṣṭhira should not be overly amiable; he must use force to restrain the ignorant and protect the learned (25–30). Yudhiṣṭhira asks if there is any barbarian law that all others must respect. Bhīṣma answers by implication only, saying simply that brahmins should be favored and treated like Gods; the good king never allows them to be vexed (30–35).

141–45 (B. 143–49; C.5459–5595.) (85a) The Conversation between the Pigeon and the Fowler.

146–48 (150–52; 5595–5674). (85b) The Story of King Janamejaya's Accidental Brahmicide.

149 (153; 5676). Bhīṣma launches into an ancient account of The Conversation between a Vulture and a Jackal. *The members of a family carried their dead boy to the cremation ground, and, once there, they sat down in grief and mourning. A vulture approached and lectured them on the universality of death and the futility of grief, and urged them to leave the boy and go home (1–10). They did so, but as they were on their way out of the burning ground, a jackal reproached them for being so unfeeling as to leave their boy behind. He suggested the boy might still be alive or even return to life. He pointed to the unfailing affection animal and bird parents have for their young though, unlike people, they gain nothing from it (10–25). The family returned to the boy's body. Again the vulture lectured them on the futility of grief and again he urged them to leave the body. When they did, the jackal urged them once again not to leave their boy. They turned back and then withdrew again and again at the opposed philosophies of the two carrion-feeders, the diurnal vulture urging them to give up and leave before nightfall, the nocturnal jackal urging them to be hopeful and remain until the sun goes down, for the boy might revive (25–90). The vulture described the terrifying features of the area after dark, telling them they were in*

danger of attack from the carrion-eating beasts. Śiva then appeared to the family, granted them a wish, and gave the boy a hundred years of life. He then made the vulture's and the jackal's hunger disappear. The family left, overjoyed by God's favor (90–110). Bhīṣma emphasizes to Yudhiṣṭhira the value of unfailing optimism (110–15).

150–51 (154–57; 5804–76). (85c) The Conversation of the Wind and the *Śalmali* Tree (and Nārada).

152 (158; 5877). Yudhiṣṭhira asks what is the source of evil deeds. Bhīṣma says it is greed. He says greed is the source of all human faults and vices, and he gives a long list of them (1–10). Greed must be conquered by a man who has conquered himself. He lists more faults coming from greed (10). Bhīṣma moves on to learned men who are afflicted with these faults. They are often hypocritical rationalizers who corrupt Law, and they are not really properly "educated" (15). Bhīṣma then describes those who are properly "educated": They have no anxieties and no attachments, and behave the same toward everyone; they are strictly observant of traditional practices, self-controlled, and dedicated to what is abidingly real; they are generous and compassionate, and strive for the welfare of all beings without any sense of "I" or "mine." Yudhiṣṭhira should honor these men who are free of greed and delusion, who see everything the same, who are awakened (20–30).
153 (159; 5912). Yudhiṣṭhira now wants to hear the basic truth about ignorance (1). Bhīṣma lists numerous faults (anger, pride, anxiety, etc.), saying they are all forms of ignorance. He says ignorance and greed are one and the same thing. Time is the ultimate cause of greed. All faults come from greed. The best course is to eradicate greedy desire as did Janaka and other great kings of the past (1–10).
154 (160; 5926). Yudhiṣṭhira wants to know what is the very best thing a Merit-seeking, Veda-reciting brahmin might do to gain the best result in this life and the next. What Law is best to carry out? (1) Taking note of the many different rules of Law that different seers have advocated, Bhīṣma declares self-control (dama) *to be the most excellent one: It enables and transcends ritual observances, purifies the soul, and enables one to find the universal reality. Bhīṣma praises self-control further as the supreme virtue (5–10). Next he gives a list of over two dozen virtues which all come together in self-control (10–15). Bhīṣma describes self-control as fostering*

universalistic, Freedom-oriented attitudes (15–20). Next he praises the man of perfected character (20) and then the man who cultivates knowledge (20–25). Bhīṣma then describes and praises the man of universalistic spirit who has renounced everything and seeks Absolute Freedom. He joins to this description further praise of self-control (25–30). The only fault with self-control is that others mistake forbearance for weakness. Renunciation in the forest is not actually necessary for the self-controlled man (30–35). Yudhiṣṭhira was cheered by this sermon and asked Bhīṣma about asceticism (35).

155 (161; 5964). Bhīṣma says the seers regard heat (tapas)*—the heat men develop in asceticism—as the foundation of everything here. The Progenitor created the world through such heat, the seers discovered the Vedas through it, perfected sages gain their powers through it, and everything that is efficacious has its power from it. Such ascetic heat makes anything possible for a man, including releasing him from serious sins. There is no higher way to develop such heat than by not eating. The Gods gained their greatness through such heat, and men can still do the same (1–10).*

156 (162; 5977). Yudhiṣṭhira asks Bhīṣma for a characterization of "the Real" (satya) *and asks how one arrives at it. Bhīṣma commends the Real as the abiding substance that underlies such important human concerns as Law, yoga meditation, and* brahman *(1–5). He then lays out thirteen forms of human behavior that manifest the Real: truthfulness, sameness toward all, self-control, unselfishness, being long-suffering, modesty, patience, not being resentful, renunciation, meditation, nobility, persistence, and non-injuriousness. Bhīṣma characterizes most of these virtues and states how one can acquire them (5–20). He concludes with more general praise of the Real (20–25).*

157 (163; 6003). Yudhiṣṭhira asks about the origins of the thirteen vices: anger, lust, grief, delusion, envy, ennui, pride, greed, selfishness, jealousy, contempt for others, resentment, and pity. Bhīṣma recounts the genesis and elimination of eleven of them (he does not deal with delusion or greed) (1–15).

158 (164; 6026). Yudhiṣṭhira condemns vicious men and asks Bhīṣma to explain the standing of the vicious man in Law. Bhīṣma gives a brief but detailed and lively sketch of men with unkind dispositions and recommends that Yudhiṣṭhira avoid such persons (1–10).

159 (165; 6039). Unasked, Bhīṣma begins lecturing on the support the king should give to pious and learned brahmins who are poor because they follow Law—support in the form of grants and support by offering sacrifices laden with presents for the priests (1–5). Brahmins are regarded as Gods, and the king should guarantee them various securities and immunities. Bhīṣma emphasizes the ideal that brahmins should be supported by the presents they receive for performing rites for others (5–15). Bhīṣma next presents various forms of inappropriate behavior by brahmins and Aryans generally and prescribes what should be done in those cases that are remediable. He presents a number of problems, among which the salient themes are inappropriate sexual liaisons (especially violation of one's teacher's bed), murder (especially brahmin-murder), and the consumption of inappropriate substances (especially the drinking of liquor) (20–70).

160 (166; 6120). Nakula (!) asks Bhīṣma about the origins of the sword (1–5). Bhīṣma gives him a full and well-formed answer (5–10). The Grandfather arose in the primordial waters and created the world (10–20). The Gods and seers observed the Laws, but the Asuras transgressed them and vied with the Gods, and tormented creatures (20–30). The seers resorted to Brahmā in heaven. Brahmā performed a tremendous and splendid sacrifice (30–35). At this sacrifice a large sword burst prodigiously from the fire. Brahmā told the assembled seers he had mentally conceived of it to slay the enemies of the Gods, and then he gave it to Rudra (35–40). Rudra then assumed a terrifying form and picked up the sword and attacked the Asuras. He slew many of them, and the rest fled. Rudra reestablished Law upon the blood-soaked earth and assumed an irenic form (40–60). Śiva gave the sword to Viṣṇu, who passed it to Marīci; it then passed in turn to the great seers, Indra, and the World Guardians. The World Guardians gave it to Manu, exhorting him to use it to protect people, and with an admonition that punishment be duly restrained. From Manu the sword passed to Ikṣvāku and then to kings of the lunar dynasty, coming finally to Droṇa, Kṛpa, and the Pāṇḍavas (60–75). Bhīṣma then concludes by telling Nakula some of the sword's general attributes, mentioning that Pṛthu later instituted the bow for protecting the earth. He commands that warriors worship the sword (80–85).

161 (167; 6210). Yudhiṣṭhira held a private conclave with his brothers and Vidura. The king asked them which was most important among Law, Profit, and Love (1). Vidura

speaks first, and first recommends "the perfections of the soul" (learning, forbearance, etc.). He then argues that Law is the most important of the three and the base of the other two (1–5). Arjuna then makes a speech commending Profit as the best of the three, the basis of the other two (5–15). Next Nakula and Sahadeva recommend Law and Profit together (20–25). Bhīmasena then argues the necessity, and even the superiority, of Love (25–35). Yudhiṣṭhira then responds by recommending complete detachment and the pursuit of a fourth good, Absolute Freedom. Yudhiṣṭhira's brothers all praise this statement, and we are told that Yudhiṣṭhira begins questioning Bhīṣma on this fourth good (40–45).

162–67 (168–73; 6264–6456)* (85d) The Story of the Ungrateful Brahmin.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

129.1 When a king's kingdom is in ruins; when he has been dilatory or too solicitous of his kinsmen; when his kingdom or the people of the capital are disaffected; when he has no stores of supplies, has suspicions of his ministers, when he has had his secrets spilled in every direction;° when his allies are not much respected, and his advisors are divided in every way as he is beset by a circle of enemy states; or when he is weak but his enemy strong; or when his mind is disturbed—tell me, Bhārata, what is left for him to do?

Bhīṣma said:

If an enemy from outside the kingdom seeks to conquer him, and if that one is conversant with Law and Profit, and is honest, the king should swiftly conclude a treaty with him, getting him to relinquish any areas 5 already conquered. If a stronger invader seeks conquest Unlawfully, or is bent upon doing evil, then the king should engage him in a peace treaty, even one with restrictions on himself.° Or he may escape the difficulty by abandoning his capital city, or by some other means. For even while this situation† prevails, as long as he is alive he may regain his possessions. There may be some crises that can be escaped only by relinquishing absolutely everything. But who that knows Profit and Law would then also let go of himself‡ as well? He should preserve himself from captivity, for what sympathy will he find amidst his enemy's wealth? He must never give himself up, should that be a possibility.

* Pages 585–86 of the Calcutta edition were bound out of order.
† = his forced exile.
‡ = commit suicide.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

When internally the kingdom is furious with him and externally his frontiers are under pressure, or his treasury is exhausted, or his secrets have been spilled abroad, what is there left for him to do?

Bhīṣma said:

10 He should quickly seek a treaty, or quickly become sharply aggressive; or he might quickly leave his location—this just as a preparation for war.

A prince conquers the earth with even a small army, if it is passionately devoted to him, well-fed, and happy, O lord of the world. If slain, he mounts to heaven; if victorious, he possesses the earth; if he gives up his life in battle, he goes to Śakra's heavenly world.

When he has acquired the entire realm, he should become gentle. He should effect discipline on the basis of his subjects' confidence, or else he had better rely upon his shoes.

Should he wish to retreat, but on his own terms, he should be conciliatory toward his enemy; he should then divest himself of his insignia and approach the other himself, along with an ally.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

130.1 Grandfather, when the most meritorious forms of Law are not available, when every kind of people transgresses Law, when every livelihood upon the earth has been taken over by barbarians°—when the worst of times has arrived, how might a brahmin survive who, out of affection, does not abandon his sons and grandsons?°

Bhīṣma said:

When such things have come to pass, one must live by relying upon the power of discernment.°

Everything in this world is for the sake of the strictly good, and nothing is for those that are not so. The king that takes from those who are not strictly good and gives it to those that are makes himself a bridge and is 5 one who really knows all of Law. Or, with the idea, "That wealth is mine, as I am going to give it away," he may take even what has not been offered voluntarily, taking care not to outrage his subjects' solid loyalty for his rule by furious measures.

Who can say anything against a wise man who can discriminate among different ways of life, who is pure thanks to the power of his discernment,° even if he does live among reprehensible people? Those whose way of life is justified by resorting to that power of discernment° find no other way of life pleasing. Those possessed of that power thrive upon their brilliance, Yudhiṣṭhira. Middling people follow the rule that one finds ready to hand° without making any discriminations; the intelligent man follows something beyond that.

The king should never vex priests, chaplains, teachers, nor brahmins,° all of whom are honored with hospitality; by vexing them one comes

10 to harm. These are the world's standard, its perennial eye;° using this standard, the king may immerse himself in whether this or that is right by it or wrong by it.

Those that live in towns may say many things to each other out of anger; the king should neither honor nor punish on the basis of what they say.° Slander should neither be spoken nor listened to, not at all; one should cover his ears, or he should leave that place for somewhere else. Yudhiṣṭhira, the behavior of piously observant people does not include slander and nasty gossip. People who are piously observant speak only of the virtues of others who are piously observant.

The king should proceed just the way a pair of excellent draft animals that are well broken in and pliable take their load and pull it equally together!° The others are merely those who go alongside the ox as he draws the load.

15 Some think conduct to be the most important indication of Law.°* Others, who favor the absolutely strict scrupulosity of Śaṅkha and Likhita° do not agree with this.† People may make such statements from either kindness or from greed.° They‡ see the expulsion of regular wrongdoers° as the punishment appropriate for brahmins; but no standard like that occurs among any but brahmins.§ And also the Gods plague those vile men who are regular wrongdoers.

One who acquires property by some subterfuge° is cut off from Law.

The king resolves upon that Law that is honored everywhere by the piously observant people, who are the cause of prosperity, and that he accepts in his heart. He is a true knower of Law who knows Law in its fourfold completion.° It is very difficult to follow the track of Law—it is

20 like trying to track a snake. One should follow the trail of Law the way a hunter might follow the trail of a wounded animal by the drops of its blood fallen upon the grass.

O you who have never wavered, you must go by that path that has been blazed this way by the piously observant. Understand, Yudhiṣṭhira, that this is the way the seer-kings behaved.

Bhīṣma said:

131.1 A king should generate his treasury from his own country or from another's. Law, the foundation of kingship, proceeds from treasure, son of Kuntī. Therefore the king should generate a treasury; and, having taken it, he must preserve it; and having preserved it, he must be kind—this is the everlasting Law.

The treasury is not produced by deeds that are purely clean, nor by

* Brahmin behavior is a self-validating standard of Right Action; thus brahmins are not subject to the king's punitive authority.

† Brahmins can do wrong and ought to be subject to punishment.

‡ = experts, the wise (who generally would be brahmins).

§ All other citizens are subject to fines, imprisonment, and corporal punishment.

deeds that are purely cruel. The king should gather his treasury from a position in the middle of those two. How can the king who has no army have a treasury, and how can he who has no treasury have an army? How can he who has no army have a kingdom, and how can he who is not a king have Royal Splendor?

5 For one who lives the high life, losing his splendid riches is like dying. Thus the king should make his treasury, his army, and his allies prosper.

(People are contemptuous of a king whose treasury is small; he cannot please them with the little he has to offer, and they thwart his enterprises. A king gains the very best reception by reason of his Royal Splendor. Royal Splendor hides his evil deeds the way clothes cover a woman's privates. People he has previously wronged trail after his goods like dogs; he finds them perpetually seeking to harm him. O most excellent of the Bharatas, how could such a king be happy?* He should exert himself and never weary—exertion is the human contribution to what happens.†)

Even if he must bend where there is no joint, he should never bow down

10 to anyone in this world. He may even take to the wilderness and live with tribes of barbarians; but he should not live together with barbarians who have eradicated all laws. An army of barbarians is good for horrific deeds, Bhārata. Everyone without exception trembles before a lawless man; even barbarians who do pitiless deeds fear such men.

He should establish law that soothes the minds of the people—even a little bit of law is honored in the world.

Some people have decided, "This world is not, nor is the next world." No one can trust such a Naysayer, so full of doubt and fear.

As the piously observant regard taking things from others,‡ so do barbarians regard harmlessness.° Among the barbarians that have laws, the subjects are devoted followers.

15 The slaying of someone who is not fighting in a war, laying hands upon the wives of the vanquished, ingratitude, taking the property of brahmins, eradicating everything without remnant, the stealing of the women and keeping them—all these are censured among the barbarians.

But, Bhārata, even those who do not make treaties with them, thinking, "They're still barbarians, even if they do avoid these things," do not carry on until they are destroyed, slaughtering them until there is no remnant: That is the settled conclusion. Thus the barbarians will carry on with that remnant on their own. The king ought not accomplish cruel deeds with the idea, "I am in a strong position." Those who do leave remnants, son, see their own survivors on every side; they that leave no remnants are ever fearful of being eradicated without trace.

* = a king with a small treasury.

† In addition to fate and chance.

‡ They think it wrong and abhorrent.

Bhīṣma said:

132.1 On this° those who know past times relate this definitive statement on deeds.°

> Law and Riches are plain and clear° to a discerning kṣatriya, and the two of them should never be separated. But the working of Law is hidden.

"This is Law,"° "This is outside Law,"° this* is just like the track of a wolf.† No one has ever actually seen the fruit of doing Law or the fruit of not doing Law in this world. When a powerful man wishes to prosper, everything is in his control. A powerful man gets Royal Splendor, an army, and advisors. But without opulent wealth one becomes degraded; what little he has is just dregs. And there is much that is inauspicious even for 5 the powerful man, and nothing saves him from those dangers. These two‡ that are grounded in fundamental reality itself save one from great danger.

> I think strength is superior to Law; Law comes from strength. Law stands upon the base of strength, like a moving creature stands upon the base of the supporting earth. Law conforms to strength, the way smoke is controlled by the wind. Law is power for a weak man,° the way a creeper depends upon a tree. Law is under the control of the strong, just as pleasure is under the control of those who have luxuries. There is nothing the strong cannot accomplish, and for the strong, nothing is polluting.°

But a wicked man° whose power has wasted away shrinks in size. And then the whole world fears him like a wolf. Disgraced and despised, he lives a miserable life. And when one's life is despicable, that might as well be 10 death. When people say that he has been pierced by his evil deeds, he is wounded by that verbal dart and suffers terrible regret.

On this subject° the teachers say this for releasing one from evil: He should serve the Triple Learning§ and wait upon the brahmins. He should gratify them with sweet words and deeds. He should be magnanimous, and he should marry into one of the great families. Reciting the virtues of others, he should say, "So shall I be." Habitually performing the required ablutions, he should recite prayers and litanies, he should be tender and not too talkative. Having done some great and extreme wrong, he should betake himself to the brahmin Order and the kṣatriya Order.° And let him do so without worrying much about this or that, even if everybody does

* That is, truly ascertaining dharma.
† = a trace of uncertain origin; see the second endnote at 132.2.
‡ = Law, or Right *(dharma,)* and Riches *(artha)*.
§ = the Vedas.

15 criticize him. One who acts this way and does no evil quickly becomes highly respected and enjoys ease and riches. And he should guard himself by this behavior. In this way he gains honor in this world and great rewards in the world beyond.

Bhīṣma said:

133.1 On this they recite this ancient account of how a barbarian endowed with laws did not come to ruin in the life beyond death. A ruler of the Niṣādas named Kāpavya was a wise, heroic warrior who was educated and not cruel. Keeping Law from ever diminishing, he was devoted to brahmin precepts, and honored a religious advisor. Born of a kṣatriya upon a Niṣāda woman, he kept the Law of kṣatriyas, and he attained perfection even though he was a barbarian. Night and day he was a tormentor of herds of animals in the forest; he understood the ways of the different species of 5 animals and had expert knowledge of the their watering holes. He knew the whole country and all the woods; always roaming the Pāriyātra mountains, he knew the Laws for all beings. His weapons were hard,* his arrows never missed, and all by himself he conquered armies of many hundreds. He paid great honor to his two aged, blind parents in the great forest. He treated them very well and fed them with honey and meat, and roots and fruits, and various other foods high and low, and he waited upon them hand and foot.

Protecting the brahmins that lived in the wild and those that passed through it in their wanderings, he brought them animals he had killed in the great forest. For those who would not take it because they suspected that is was a barbarian's food, he would put some down at their houses at dawn and go.

10 Many thousands of lawless and ruthless barbarians chose him to be the chief of their group.

The barbarians said:

Wise one, you understand different moments, places, and times, you are virtuous and carry hard weapons. Be the main chief of our group, for you are highly regarded by all of us. We will do whatever you tell us to. Protect us in accordance with the proper rules like our father, like our mother.

Kāpavya said:

You ought not slay a woman, nor one who is cowering, nor a child, nor an ascetic. A noncombatant man should not be slain, and women should not be taken by force. Under no circumstances should the female of any kind of being be slain by a warrior. Everything must be good for cows and 15 brahmins; one should make war for their sake. But grain should not be trampled down, nor should anyone erect any obstacles to the plowing of the fields, nor where the Gods are paid honor, or the ancestors, or guests.

Of all beings, a brahmin deserves to be let go free. And any recompense

* = metal.

that is to be made to them* should be made, even if it is the whole of one's property. In all the three worlds there is no one who will save the man whose ruin they† intone when they are furiously enraged. He who insults brahmins or approves their extinction will be ruined as surely as the sun will rise.

He who lives here looks to the benefits of doing so. Our army will attack any who will not remit to us as they are able.

20 The rod of punishment has been ordained for the purpose of education, not for the sake of inflicting corporal punishment—that is the settled conclusion. Corporal punishment is taught by tradition to be Lawful for those who harm educated people.‡

There are some who make their living by damaging the country; for that reason, they are likened to worms upon a corpse. On the other hand, those barbarians who would live in this world in accordance with the Learned Traditions of Law, and even though they are barbarians, they attain perfection directly.

Bhīṣma said:

They paid homage to Kāpavya's entire instruction, and they all took up that way of life and quit their evil ways. By this deed Kāpavya attained great perfection. Fostering the security of the virtuous, he caused the barbarians to cease their evil ways.

25 Anyone who has this account of the deeds of Kāpavya recounted regularly never encounters any danger from the people of the wild, nor any danger at all from mortals or immortals—not from a piously observant man, nor from anyone not observant, king. For that one is the chief in the wilds.

Bhīṣma said:

134.1 On this those who know the ancient times relate some *gāthā* verses sung by Brahmā that tell the way kings should generate their treasury.

"The wealth of those who regularly worship the Gods with the sacrificial rites should never be taken, for that wealth is the property of the Gods. The kṣatriya should take from barbarians, and from those who do not perform rites. Kṣatriyas are to protect people and consume them, Bhārata. For wealth in this world really does belong to the kṣatriya and not to any other. That wealth should be for his army or for the rites of sacrificial worship. Having harvested inedible plants, people cook them

5 and they are edible.§ The men who know the Vedas say when someone does not worship Gods, or ancestors, or mortals with offerings, his

* = brahmins. † = brahmins.

‡ That is, brahmins trained in Vedic sciences.

§ So the king takes useless substance from barbarians and people who make no use of Vedic rituals and "cooks" it into the useful wealth used in rituals and an army protecting those who perform rituals.

having wealth is pointless.° The king who follows Law should take that substance, for when it is like that* it does not please the heavenly worlds; it is not royal treasure, king. Having taken from those not piously observant, he presents it to those that are piously observant. Having made himself into a bridge, I judge him to be a man who knows Law.

"As some plants, animals, and beings endowed with speech come into being from vile sources, so too are the rites of sacrifice carried out from vile sources.†

"One should treat those who do not perform the rites of sacrifice as one does biting flies or stinging ants‡—thus was the Good Law instituted.

10 "Merit-Bringing Law that is subtle and even more subtle can come to be from just about anything, the way soft *ulapa* grass grows from crud on the ground."

Bhīṣma said:

135.1 Listen attentively to this superb story° that bears on this. It is about being dilatory in deciding what to do and what not to do.

In a pond that was not too shallow there were three *śakula* fishes that were friends. They had become companions amid a prodigious number of fish, O son of Kuntī. One of these fish always knew when the right time had arrived, another was far-seeing, and the third one was dilatory.

Once some fishermen drained the entire pond by means of various

5 openings made in its lowest spots. When the far-sighted fish realized that the pond was disappearing, he told his two friends that danger had arrived. "A catastrophe has occurred for all of us that live in the water! We must quickly go elsewhere before the way dries up. He who uses sound policies to prevent future evils never puts himself at risk. Please! Let's go!"

But the dilatory one among them said, "What you said is exactly right. But we need not rush just yet, that's my considered opinion." Then the one who knew how to meet things with a cool head said to the far-sighted one,

10 "When the time comes I will omit nothing of what is necessary." This said, the very intelligent, far-sighted fish left; he went by the one remaining stream to a deep body of water.

Later, when the fishermen checked and saw that all the water had been drained from the pond they caught the fish with various devices. Flopping around in the pond with no water, the dilatory fish and others flopped into one of the nets there. When he saw that fish were being strung together on a line, the cool-headed fish burrowed his way into the midst of the other

* In the hands of barbarians and those not performing rituals.

† That is, with material substance taken from barbarians and people who do not worship brahminically.

‡ Text note: see endnote at 134.9.

fish and swallowed a piece of the line.° He latched onto the stringer he had swallowed, and he waited. The fishermen believed that all the fish were
15 tied to the line. Later, as the fish were being rinsed in clean water, the fish with presence of mind let go of the rope and quickly made his escape. But the slow, dim-witted, dilatory fish was unconscious, and the dolt died because he was senseless.

So, he who erroneously fails to realize that the exact moment has come perishes fast, like the dilatory fish. The man who thinks, "I am clever," and does not do what is best at the outset, runs a risk, like the one who was cool-minded. The man who makes suitable provisions for the future
20 gains what is best beyond measure. He is like the far-sighted one. Minutes, seconds, hours, days, half-hours, instants, split-seconds, fortnights, months, seasons of equal length, and years.° The earth is declared to be the "place." Time is not visible. Whatever is properly required to realize an intended goal, that too.* In the Learned Teachings on Law and on Profit, and in the Learned Teachings on Absolute Freedom the seers teach that these two† are the two principal things. They are regarded as the regulators of Love for men as well. A skillful man, who checks things carefully as he acts, should prepare completely for the anticipated time and place, and then he will gain his result from them.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

136.1 You've talked° of understanding as the best thing of all, O bull of the Bharatas—understanding of what will come as well as understanding of what has happened—while procrastination leads to disaster. Most excellent of the Bharatas, king, I want to hear that highest understanding that will keep a king from making mistakes when he is completely surrounded by his enemies. You are well versed in Law and Profit, and you are wise and conversant with learned works on every subject. I am asking you, O best of the Kurus, so please explain this to me.

How does a king engulfed by numerous enemies keep going? I want
5 to hear this, and all of it in accord with the rules. Many against one, antagonistic enemies with prior grievances will work hard to undo a king when he is in trouble. How can a weak king stand—all by himself with no allies—when mighty kings on every side press their demands upon him? How does one discover friend and enemy, O bull of the Bharatas? How does one act as neither friend nor enemy? When an enemy whose character is well known becomes a friend, what should a man do? What shall he do to be safe and happy? With whom should he fight? With whom should he form an alliance? Or how might a weak king keep going in the midst of his
10 enemies? This is the most important of all my duties. There is no one who

* In addition to the usual principal considerations of time and place, a third is suggested: appropriate instruments.

† = time and place.

can speak to all of this except Bhīṣma the son of Śaṃtanu, whose senses are under control and who is true to his promises. And it is extremely difficult to find someone who will hear it. Check into all this, O strong-armed hero, and tell me about it.

Bhīṣma said:

This is an inquiry befitting you, Yudhiṣṭhira, one that arises from your fine qualities. Son, Bhārata, hear from me in its entirety the secret for bad times.

Through the application of people's different capabilities in different projects,° enemies become friends, and friends become alienated—indeed, with changes in these there is always further change.° Therefore, after taking critical cognizance of place and time, he should be confident in making decisions on what should be done and not done—let him go to
15 war, let him regularly make alliances with those that are intelligent. Let him make war even with those who wish him well, and let him make alliance even with his enemies, but, Bhārata, his life must always be protected. The man who never makes an alliance with his enemies is not a very wise man. He shall never gain any goal or any rewards, Bhārata. But he who makes alliance with his enemies and opposes his friends, having perceived the appropriate fit of interests, finds tremendous rewards.

On this they recite the ancient account of a conversation between a cat and a mouse beneath a banyan tree.

In a vast forest there was once a tremendous banyan tree. It was completely overgrown with tangles of vines, and flocks of many different kinds of birds roosted in it.

20 With its many trunks it was like a great cloud giving cool shade. Home to many wild animals, this delightful tree grew near the town of Vairantya.

At the base of this tree there lived a very wise mouse named Old Gray whose burrow had a hundred mouths. And for some time a cat* named Hairy had lived happily in the tree's branches, a nemesis of the birds.° A Caṇḍāla who had built a house in Vairantya came there every night after sunset and set a trap. Having carefully laid his snares made of sinew, he would go home and sleep soundly, and then go back when the night grew
25 light. Many different animals were caught in his trap every night.

One time the cat was careless and got caught there. When wise Old Gray saw that the enemy who was always trying to kill him had been captured, he understood the situation and roamed about, feeling completely secure. He wandered through the forest with a great sense of ease, foraging for something to eat. He soon spied a piece of meat. He climbed up on top of the trap and ate the meat, laughing to himself as he stood over his trapped rival. He looked up once while intently eating the
30 meat and saw that another of his horrible enemies had come there, one

* Probably a palm civet; see endnote at 136.22.

that also dwelled in a burrow in the earth, a darting mongoose named Tawny with coppery red eyes, who looked like the God of war.* The mongoose had smelled the mouse and hurried over, and now he was standing erect on the ground, looking up at the mouse and licking his lips in expectation of a meal. And then the mouse saw another enemy, one that lived in a hollow of the tree, an owl named Moonshine, a night-hunter with a sharp beak. Being within reach of both the mongoose and the owl, the terrified mouse thought, "What does one do to survive in such terribly dire straits as these, when danger has sprung up on every side and death is at hand?"

35 Opposed like this in every direction, everything seeming equally bad, he was stricken with terror. Then he worked out this great strategy.

"Such dire straits almost always lead to destruction. There is one chance in a hundred I'll live. This crisis is upon me with risk on every side. The mongoose would get me as soon as I got on the ground. And if I stay here, the owl will get me, or the cat will, when it tears the net apart.

"But someone as wise as I am ought not panic. I will make every effort to save my life as long as I have breath. Wise beings, who are endowed with the intelligence to figure things out, who are conversant with the science of practical policy, are not perplexed when they encounter a crisis, 40 nor after achieving great successes. Right now I see no other way besides the cat. That fellow is in trouble and I can do him a great service. I am harried by three enemies at the moment, how else can I save my life? So I will make use of my enemy, the cat. I shall contribute to his welfare by resorting to the techniques of the *kṣatra*, and I will cheat the whole bunch of them with this plan.

"Now, my most intractable foe has gotten into the very worst trouble. If by chance this fool could be made to understand it to be for his own benefit, he might ally himself with me, since he is in a fix. The authorities say that one who is in difficulty and wishes to save his life should furnish 45 help even to his enemy when that one is beset by one who is stronger. A smart enemy can be good, but a stupid ally is not. Really, my life depends upon this cat. Okay! I will thoroughly explain to him that the motive here is saving himself. And now may this enemy of mine happen to be smart!"

Then that mouse, who understood the real principles of how practical matters work, who was acquainted with the times for treaties and warfare both, made this ingratiating statement to the cat. "O cat, I am addressing you as a friend. You still live, don't you? I want you to survive. The best thing to do here is the same for you and me both. Do not lose heart friend, you will be alive, just as before. I will get you out. I will even risk my life for 50 your sake. There is a way here. I see a very good way for you to escape and for myself to get what is good for me. The truth is I came to see this way as I considered a plan for myself. What is best for me and what is best for you

* = Skanda; see endnote at 136.30.

are the same for both of us. This evil minded pair of mongoose and owl nearby does not attack, so I am fine for the moment, cat. But this yelping mongoose,° this hooting owl,° each eyes me with quickly darting eyes° and I get more and more nervous the longer I stay here clinging to the branches of this tree.

"They say the forming of friendship among virtuous people takes place after just seven steps. Now you are my smart neighbor. I will see to it that 55 we continue to live together, you are in no danger of dying. Cat, you cannot cut your bonds without me. I will cut your bonds if you do not kill me. You belong in the top of the tree, and I belong at its base. We have lived here in this tree for a long time, as you well know. The wise do not praise anyone no one else ever trusts, nor anyone who never trusts anyone else; the minds of these two are never settled. So, let's let friendliness develop between us! And may our union be true! Learned, smart men have no praise for anything for which the time has passed, for it is useless. Perceive the fit between our goals exactly as it is: I want you to live, you want me 60 to live. If someone wants to cross a wide and deep river with a piece of wood, he takes that wood across and the wood takes him across. Such cooperation between us will mean a sure escape.° I will save you and you will save me."

After he made this reasoned and clear statement of what was good for the both of them, Old Gray, worrying about the time, looked at the cat expectantly. And when he had heard this fine proposal, Old Gray's very savvy enemy the cat made a statement that was also reasoned and had a clear meaning. He was intelligent, and an accomplished speaker. Taking note of his desperate condition, he lavished honor upon the mouse in a 65 conciliatory way, praising the mouse's statement. Then that cat Hairy, teeth and claws sharp, eyes glinting like iridescent cat's eye gemstones as he indolently looked up at the mouse, said, "Friend, I am delighted. Blessings upon you, since you wish to see me survive! If you know what is best to do, then do it instead of thinking about it. I am very sorely afflicted, but you are more afflicted than I am. So let's form an alliance since we're both afflicted; don't give it any thought. The time has come; make sure our plan succeeds. When I am out of this trouble, what you have done will not be forgotten. I have set aside my pride, and I am devoted to you. I am your pupil and will work for your welfare. I have taken refuge in you, sir, and now act under your command."

70 When the cat had said this and put himself under Old Gray's command, the mouse made another beneficial statement that was highly significant and apposite. "The noble things you say, sir, are not too unusual for someone in your condition. But you know the pathways I use. Listen to this, which is for my well-being. I shall snuggle up to you. I am in great danger from the mongoose. Save me, but do not kill me yourself. I am able to free you. And protect me from that owl. That cruel one harries me too. I will cut through your bonds, friend, I swear that truthfully."

After Hairy heard that apt, fitting, and significant statement, he looked up at Old Gray with joy and honored him with a welcome. The cat gestured his respect for Old Gray and became very friendly. Having thought it through very carefully, that wise one was delighted, and he hastened to say, "Come here right away. Blessings upon you! You are a friend as dear as my life. Wise one, through your favor I will have my life back shortly. Whatever I can do for you now, in this condition, just order it and I will do it. We must join forces, friend. Once I have escaped from this danger, I and my relatives and all of my friends will do whatever favors and services you need done. Once freed from this fix, friend, I am truly yours. I shall bring you joy. I shall be able to repay you."

Having made the cat understand this to be in his own interest, the mouse then entered without a worry and accomplished his ends completely.

Thus reassured by the cat, the learned mouse went to sleep in all ease on the breast of the cat, as if it were his mother or father. When they saw the mouse curled up in the bosom of the cat, the mongoose and the owl gave up hope and went home. Then, king, still lying next to the cat's body, Old Gray, who understood places and times, gnawed through the cords of the net very slowly, waiting for the right time. Then the cat, tormented by those bonds and impatient, scowled at the mouse as he slowly gnawed those cords. The cat began to urge the mouse on, as Old Gray was taking his time to cut those cords. "Why not hurry up, friend? Why are you reluctant to finish the job? Cut those cords before the dirty, dog-eating Caṇḍāla° comes back, O slayer of your enemies."°

After the impatient cat said this, the smart Old Gray said something in his own interest to that not-so-wise cat who was in his control. "Keep quiet, friend. I will not hurry for you. There is no rush. We understand the time here; the time will not fail to come. It does not serve any purpose to finish a task undertaken at the wrong time. When it is undertaken at the right time, then doing it serves a great purpose. If you are freed before it is time, then you are a great danger to me. So just wait for the right moment. Why are you in a hurry, friend? As soon as I see the Caṇḍāla coming with the knife in his hand, then, when there is danger for both of us alike, I will gnaw through the cord. When you are set free at that time, you will climb up the tree, for then there will be nothing else for you to do but save your own life. Then, my good Hairy, when you have gotten clear of him, but are still trembling and frightened, I shall enter my burrow, and you, sir, shall go into the branches."

But the cat was very intelligent, and he understood the principles of making speeches. After the mouse had made this statement promoting his own welfare, Hairy, seeking to save his own life, and impatient with regard to his own need, affected complete humility and spoke to the dilatory mouse. "Righteous people do not gladly fulfill their friends' needs in this

fashion. Since I was quick to free you from your difficulty, you should be quick to do what is good for me. You who are so wise, exert yourself so we both come out well. Perhaps you are dragging out the time because you are thinking of how we were enemies before. Look! It was obviously wicked of me to act that way. But now my life is slipping away! Don't hold a grudge against me just because earlier I did some nasty things without realizing what I was doing. I beg your pardon! Have mercy on me!"

The wise mouse, who knew the Traditions of Learning, who was highly regarded for his intelligence, then made this excellent statement to the cat who was going on like this, "I have listened to you, cat, as you represented your own interests. Now pay close attention as I represent my interests. When one must secure an ally who is frightening, or when an ally brings danger, one must act with great wariness of that ally, as if one had his hand near a serpent's mouth. When one who has made an alliance with someone powerful does not guard himself warily, then, after the alliance has been used, it tends to harm him, like something unwholesome one may have eaten. No one is really an ally to anyone, no one is really a friend to anyone—interests are just linked to other interests the way elephants in the forest are tied to other elephants. When a job has been finished, no one pays any attention to the one who did it; so one should make sure to leave all his tasks with something still to be done. At just the right time, sir, you will be filled with fear of the Caṇḍāla and intent on getting away, and you won't be able to capture me. Most of the threads have now been chewed through, only one thread remains. I will cut right through that one just then. Be content, Hairy."

As these two unfortunate creatures conversed like this, the night dwindled away, and terror crept over Hairy. At dawn the Caṇḍāla, whose name was Crossbar, appeared, knife in hand, surrounded by a pack of dogs. He was a grotesque, dark-brown man with a fat butt and a bald head; an old gray-beard, filthy dirty, with pointed ears and a big, wide mouth—he was a horrible apparition. When he saw this man, who looked like a messenger of Yama's,* the cat was stricken with terror and said to Old Gray, "What are you going to do now?" (The mongoose and the owl† were also frightened when they saw that horrible apparition, and they instantly lost all hope. Those two powerful and intelligent creatures that had combined‡ could not now be overwhelmed with force because of that wise policy. Once the mongoose and the owl saw that the cat and the mouse had formed an alliance to do what needed to be done, each of them immediately went home.) The mouse then cut through the thread for the cat, and the cat rushed up that tree as soon as he was freed. And Old Gray, having escaped

* = the Lord of the Dead.
† Textual doublet; see endnote at 136.112–14.
‡ = the mouse and the cat.

that danger, having escaped with his horrible enemy, went into his hole, while Hairy preferred the branches of the tree. The Caṇḍāla took up his trap, looked every which way, and immediately left that place and went home, his hopes thwarted, O bull of the Bharatas.

Afterwards, having escaped from this danger and having regained his precious life, Hairy, perched in the tree top, said to Old Gray down in his hole, "If I had not made some alliance, I would have been finished just like that! I hope you do not have any suspicions of me. You did me a good turn
120 and I am grateful. You came to trust me, you gave me my life! Why don't you come near me now that it's time to enjoy our friendship? Someone who first makes friends but will not stand with them later is a man of poor judgment who will find no friends when he is in terrible, dire straits. You made me a friend then because of what I could do for you, friend; now that I have become your friend, you should enjoy me. All my friends and all my relatives will offer you honor and respect, as pupils do a dear teacher. And I will offer you and all your friends and relatives honor and respect. Who
125 that was grateful would not honor one who returned to him his life? You, sir, must be the master of my body and my house. Be the commander of all my affairs. Be my advisor, wise one. Command me as if you were my father. There is no danger to you from me, I swear it with my life. In intelligence you are Uśanas* himself in bodily form, while we preside over power. Anyone who made use of power together with your counsel would be victorious."

When the mouse had been addressed in this highly ingratiating way by the cat, he who knew the ultimate interests here softly stated what was good for himself. "I have listened to everything you have said, my good
130 Hairy. Now you listen as I tell you just how it seems to me. You need to know what allies are, and you must also be taught about enemies. This is a very subtle point observed in the world, and it is esteemed as wisdom.

> "There are friends who appear to be enemies, and there are enemies who appear to be friends. Those that have been wooed with conciliation are not taken into account, for they are under the sway of passion or greed.
>
> "No one is one's enemy by birth; no one is one's friend by birth. Friends and enemies are produced through the application of people's different capabilities.
>
> "When someone sees his own interests served while another is alive, then that one stays alive just that long; he will be that one's friend just as long as there is no change in the situation.

* The Bhārgava sage who was house-priest and advisor of the Asuras.

> "There is no friendship that is really lasting, nor any enmity that is permanent. Friends and enemies are born from the appropriate fit among their interests.
>
> 135 "A friend becomes an enemy at some change of circumstance, or an enemy becomes a friend. Self interest is what is most powerful.
>
> "He who does not recognize the appropriate fit of interests and puts his trust in his friends and never lets up toward his enemies has shaky prospects for survival.
>
> "He who resolves only to be nice, whether it be a friend or a foe, without recognizing the appropriate fit of interests, has shaky judgment.
>
> "One should not trust someone who does not trust him, nor should he trust another even if he does trust him. The danger that arises from trust cuts off even its roots.
>
> "Father, mother, and sons are understood in terms of the appropriate fit of interests, and mother's brothers, sisters' sons, and other kin and relatives.
>
> 140 "A father and mother will abandon a dear son who has fallen. Everyone in the world protects himself. See how essential one's own interests are.

"I judge you to be well versed in deceit, when, right after you escape, you seek to do me a service that will lead to my happiness and is risk-free. You have descended the banyan tree to my lair here!

"Earlier, you did not figure out the trap that had been laid because you are fickle. A fickle being is no good for himself, so how will he be any good for others? A fickle being ruins all projects, no doubt about it.

"You say sweet things, 'You, sir, are dear to me.' That is all just a lie. Listen to me at some length!

145 "One becomes dear to another for a reason; and one becomes an enemy to another for a reason. Every living being in the world seeks his interests. There is no one who is really dear to anyone. Take the friendship for each other of two brothers from the same womb, or of a husband and wife—I see no friendliness of anyone in this world toward another that does not have some cause behind it. Even if brothers are angry for some other reason, or if someone's wife is, they become friendly again automatically,* but another person does not become friendly again. One man becomes dear through gifts, another through the saying of nice things, another through the recitation of ritual formulas, the making of offerings, or the recitation of prayers and litanies—everyone becomes friendly for the sake

* = *svabhāvataḥ*, "because of the intrinsic nature (of the relationship)."

of some need. When a cause for it occurred, there was friendliness between us; there is none now because a different cause operates. As the situation that was the cause has dissolved, so the friendliness there was in that
150 situation has ceased. Could I possibly think the reason I am dear to you, sir, is anything other than your seeking food? I am fully aware of that.

"Time alters the underlying causes, and self-interest follows along; the wise man recognizes his self-interest, and the world follows along. You should not say such things to someone who is learned, who is an expert in self-interest, when it is not the time for it, when you are not in any trouble; the real cause here is just your self-interest. Thus I never deviate from my own interest, and I am at ease in both alliance and in opposition. The outer forms of my interests change from moment to moment like the shapes of clouds. Having been my enemy this very day, and later this very day my friend, and now again this very day my enemy, see how changeable the
155 conjunctions of interests are! As long as there was some underlying cause, there was friendship between us. The friendship has gone now, along with that cause, which was bound to time. You are my enemy beyond all limit; you became a friend because of some particular capabilities I had in a given situation. That service completed, your disposition has returned to enmity.

"Since I really know the sciences that are taught on these matters, how could I possibly fall into the trap you've set? Tell me that? I was freed through your heroic deed, and you, sir, were freed through my heroic deed. Now that we have rendered these favors to each other, there is no further association between us. Your interests have now been accomplished, friend, and my interests have been satisfied. There is nothing else whatsoever I might do for you except be a meal!

160 "I am food, you are the one who eats; I am weak, you are strong. There can be no alliance between the two of us when such unequal power has been allotted us. I admire your cunning very much, that you, right after your escape, seek to make me your food! Supposedly to lead to my happiness, supposedly involving no risk to me.° You were caught in the trap because you sought food; and now that you have escaped you have sallied forth again from hunger. Having allied yourself with me as 'one who knows the Learned Traditions,' you would certainly eat me now. I know you are hungry; it is your feeding time. You, having allied yourself with me, really want me for food. And you commend your wife and sons
165 to me to get my compliance, but that does not suit me, friend. Why would your loving family, your dear wife and your sons, not joyously eat me up, as soon as they saw me together with you?

"I will not join you. The motive for our union has passed. If you're going to stand here recalling the good deed I did you, then think about what would be good for me. What being with any sense who is his enemy's proper food would go within that one's range when he is tormented,

hungry, and hunting for a meal? All the best to you, Hairy! You make me nervous, so I am going far away! I will not unite with you, be content with that. Close proximity to one who is more powerful is never recommended. Wise one, I always have to be afraid of one who is stronger, even if he is
170 peaceable. If there is anything I can usefully do for you, then tell me what I might do. I will grant you any wish, but never will I give you my own self. For one's own sake one should abandon one's progeny, one's kingdom, or jewels, or wealth. But even if he gives up everything he owns, one should preserve his own self. Lordship, wealth, and jewels—even if they currently belong to one's enemies—have been observed to return to those who survive, so we've been taught. But giving oneself up is not countenanced, as it is for wealth and jewels. One's self must be protected in every circumstance, even at the cost of one's wife or riches. Crises arising from their own faults do not happen to men who have guarded the principal part of themselves, who do only deeds they have considered very carefully.
175 When the weak rightly understand their stronger enemies, then their minds—once they have decided what is good for themselves—cannot be shaken from that."

So did Old Gray bluntly scold the cat. The cat, abashed, said this to the mouse. "I admire your wisdom very much, you who are so devoted to my well-being. You, whose view of the matter is so completely different from mine, have spoken according to the basic realities of interests. But please, righteous creature, do not understand me here otherwise: My friendship toward you came only from your giving me back my life. I know Law, I know which are the good personal attributes, and especially do I know what you did for me. I am affectionate toward my friends, especially those
180 such as you. So in these circumstances, righteous creature, you should not shun me. I and all my relatives would give up our lives, if you were to shun me. A reproach is the punishment the wise have established for those that are clever like me. You who know the principles of Law ought not suspect me of being your death."

As the cat was praising him like this, the mouse spoke to the cat gravely and earnestly. "You are a righteous creature, sir. I have gotten your point. You feel friendship for me, but I don't trust you. You cannot get me to unite with you again by singing my praises, nor by offering me streams of riches. The wise do not go under the control of their enemies for no reason at all, friend. Listen carefully to two verses that were composed by Uśanas on this subject."

185 "'Having made an alliance with an enemy more powerful than oneself for a common end, one should be fully attentive and behave with cunning; and having accomplished his goal, he should not trust the other.

"'Therefore one should protect his own life in all circumstances; everything—goods, progeny, and so on—is good only for one who is alive.'

"The best summary of the sciences of practical policy is thought to be the word 'distrust.' Therefore distrust of other men is complete well-being for oneself. Those who are distrustful are not slain by their enemies, even if they are weak, while those that are trustful are slain right away, even if they are strong and their enemies are weak. I must protect myself in every way from the likes of you, cat. And you must protect yourself from the Caṇḍāla, who is offensive by birth."

190 The cat panicked in terror as the mouse said this, and he scampered straight into his hole. Then wise Old Gray, who knew the basic truths about the matters taught in the Learned Traditions, went to another hole, having amply demonstrated how capable his mind was. In the same way, many other powerful enemies were bested by Old Gray all by himself, through his intelligence; he was weak but he was smart.

A wise man should make alliance even with an enemy, if that one be able to help—the mouse and the cat both escaped by relying upon each other.

Thus have I clarified at length the path of the *kṣatra* Law, king. Hear 195 it again in summary. Two beings locked in mutual enmity fashioned unsurpassable friendliness between themselves. Then each tried to master the other, and the wiser one did master the other completely by relying upon the power of his mind. (The wiser one can be overcome, even by stupid opponents, through carelessness.) Therefore he who is frightened should act as though not frightened, he who does not trust should act as though he trusts. Paying close attention, he should not waver; he who wavers perishes. Alliance with an enemy for some time, opposition to a friend at the right time—Yudhiṣṭhira, those who know the principles of these things always say, "This must always be done."

Having thought of it along these lines, great king, and having arrived at the meaning of the Learned Science, one who is diligent and careful should 200 act as if frightened of some prior danger. One should make preparations as if frightened and arrange countermeasures that way too. Understanding starts from fear, and it is produced from the diligence of one who is careful.

He who fears future dangers is never in danger, but there is great danger for him who never fears, because of his laxity. One should absolutely never give the advice, "Do not be fearful," because then one never comes to understand danger. When danger is understood, one might go to those who comprehend the matter.° Thus, he who is frightened should act as though not frightened; he who does not trust should act as though he trusts. Aware of the gravity of what he must do, he will not do anything that is the least bit false.

So I have declared this story to you, Yudhiṣṭhira. Now that you have 205 heard it, act accordingly in the middle of your allies. Having grasped the principal idea* and the difference between an enemy and a friend, the right times for uniting and separating, the means of escaping in the midst of a crisis, and "having made an alliance with an enemy more powerful than himself for a common end, the king should carry out his agreement with cunning, and having accomplished his goal, he should not trust the other."†

Rise to this practical policy, Yudhiṣṭhira, that is not inconsistent with the Group of Three,‡ delighting your subjects all the more having learned this.

March forward with the brahmins, Pāṇḍava, Bhārata, for brahmins are the highest good in this world and in heaven. They are the ones who know Law, and they are always grateful, lord. Honored, they do splendid deeds and bring early victory, king.

210 The kingdom is the highest good, king. You will gain glory and fame and the continuation of your family in due course, as is proper.

§ Bhārata, once a king has studied all this nicely expressed doctrine on two parties' joining and separating—doctrine that was conceived by truly remarkable insight—he should put it into practice in the circle of his enemies, king.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

137.1 O strong-armed hero, you have given the advice that one should not trust his enemies. But how can a king do anything if he trusts no one? There is extreme danger for the king from trusting others, but how can a king who never feels at ease toward anyone conquer his enemies, prince? Cut through my doubt. After hearing this story about mistrust, grandfather, my mind is all mixed up.

Bhīṣma said:

Son of Kuntī, listen to the conversation that took place in King 5 Brahmadatta's palace between "Adorable" and Brahmadatta. For a long time a bird named Adorable‖ dwelled in the women's apartments of Brahmadatta's palace in Kāmpilya. Like the pheasant, she knew the calls of all beings; she was an omniscient being who knew all Laws even though she had taken birth as an animal. She gave birth there to a splendidly beautiful son, and at the same time a son was born to the king and queen.

Once Adorable went to the ocean shore and picked two fruits to feed to her son and the king's son. The fruits tasted sweet like the food of the Gods, and they caused an increase of energy and strength. She gave one to her son and the other to the prince. From eating the fruit, the prince became 10 extremely robust. He left the arms of his nurse and played with the bird. He

* = the primacy of self-preservation.
† Bhīṣma quotes the mouse quoting Uśanas with a slight variation; see stanza 185 above.
‡ Law, Riches, and Pleasure. § A regular jagatī triṣṭubh. ‖ = Pūjanī.

took that bird born at the same time as he to a deserted place and killed it. Then he returned to the arms of his nurse. The mother bird, who had been off picking fruit, returned later and she saw her son lying on the ground, killed by the boy. Adorable was overcome with grief when she saw her dead son. Distraught and wailing, her face bathed in tears, she declaimed: "Kṣatriyas cannot associate with others! They have no affection for others, they have no friendship! They participate with others to get something done and then, when their goals have been accomplished, they abandon them. Kṣatriyas should never be trusted! They harm everyone! And after wronging someone they are always conciliatory toward him, but
15 insincerely. I will now wreak fitting vengeance upon this horribly cruel ingrate who has slain my trust. Triple is his sin, because he killed someone born and raised with him, one who ate with him, one who depended upon him for protection."

Adorable then put out the prince's two eyes with her talons. Having regained her composure, she said, "Evil done for one's own wishes always settles on the doer, but a deed done in recompense does not destroy either one's good or bad karma. If someone does an evil deed, and it does not take its effect upon him,° then it is made to fall upon his sons; and if not upon them, then upon his grandsons and descendants."

Brahmadatta said:

20 We did the deed, you did the avenging deed, so now we two are even. Stay, Adorable, do not go.

Adorable said:

When someone has wronged another, the wise do not recommend his continuing to stay in that place; withdrawing from there is better. King, no one should ever trust someone against whom he has committed hostilities,° not even if that one adopts conciliatory ways. The fool is trapped right away then, for the animosity does not really abate. The enmity felt by those who have feuded goes down into their children and grandchildren, and when the children and grandchildren have perished, it goes on into the next world. Distrust of all against whom one has committed hostilities is what leads to happiness. Trust should never be given simply and exclusively, for that will slay all trust.

25 One should not trust another who does not trust him, nor should he trust another even if he does trust him. One might, if he wishes, make others trust him, but he should never trust others.

* Mother and father are the very best of all relatives. One's wife is old age, one's son is merely a seed, one's brother is one's enemy, and a friend always has a wet hand°—really, one's self alone is the knower of pleasure and pain.

* One proto-śālinī triṣṭubh stanza.

An alliance between those who have feuded is not possible. The basis on which I have stayed here has been violated. When a person who has harmed someone is later treated very well by that one with riches and compliments, his mind becomes distrustful—earlier he was violently fearful. An energetic person who has been both honored and insulted
30 should leave that dwelling where first there was honor and later insults. I have lived in your house for a long time without suffering any harm, but now this enmity has sprung up. Rest easy, you, I am leaving.

Brahmadatta said:

When one avenges an injury someone committed against him, the avenger commits no wrong against the one who did the injury; the original offender becomes free of his debt by that act of vengeance. Stay, Adorable, do not go.

Adorable said:

Friendship cannot be forged again between one who does injury and the victim. The perpetrator knows that in his heart, and so does the victim.

Brahmadatta said:

Friendship can be forged again between one who does injury and the victim. Cessations of hostilities have been seen to happen; neither meets with evil again.

Adorable said:

The enmity has not passed. One is not reassured to think, "I have been mollified." A fool is trapped by trusting; therefore it is really better that I
35 not be seen. Some who cannot be captured easily, not even with well-sharpened weapons, get captured with friendly solicitation, the way elephants are trapped by other elephants.

Brahmadatta said:

Living together produces affection—affection even for one's executioners—and it produces mutual trust, such as there is between dogs and dog-eating Caṇḍālas. From living together comes tenderness, even between people who have feuded. Enmity does not last, it's like water on the leaf of a lotus.

Adorable said:

Enmity arises from five sources, and the learned are aware of them—enmity arises over women, over dwelling-places, from things said, because of rivalries with others, and offenses against others. The kṣatriya should make it a particular concern to eliminate anyone who gives rise to enmity; he may do so in public or in secret after taking cognizance of the circumstances of place, strength, and so on.

40 A person should never trust one against whom he has committed hostilities, not even if he is a friend. Concealed enmity lasts and lasts, like the fire that is concealed in wood.° Like Aurva's fire° below the ocean, the fire of enmity does not die out, king, not through wealth, nor punishments, nor conciliation, nor learned disquisitions. Neither the fire of enmity, once

it has arisen, nor the deed produced by the offense, dies down without having burned someone up, without having destroyed one of them or the other.

When a person who has previously harmed someone is then treated very well by him with riches and compliments, the offender will not relax, he will not be trustful—his deed makes him violently fearful. As no harm at all was ever done—none by me to you, nor by you, sir, to me—I used to live here because I trusted you. But now I do not trust you.

Brahmadatta said:

45 By Time is done what will be done. Likewise, do all the different actions occur through Time. So who injures whom in this world? Birth and death take place in this world in balance. One is made to act by Time, one is alive because of it. Time burns all beings up, like a fire that has gotten fuel; some are captured all at once, but not others, who are taken one by one. Good lady, I am not the one who measures, nor are you, in what one of us does to the other. Time is always the one who sets the pleasure and pain of beings. So live here with affection, unharmed, in accordance with Time. Whatever you have done to me is forgiven. Now you forgive, Adorable.

Adorable said:

50 If you say Time is the one that measures, then no one would have any hostility toward anyone. But why do relatives seek vengeance when a relative has been killed? Why did the Gods and the Asuras assail each other in the past? If death is measured by Time, and pleasure and pain, or being and nonbeing, why do physicians want to use medicine for someone ill? If it is Time that causes beings to develop to their ends,° why is there treatment with medicines? Why do people stupefied with grief rave? If you say Time is the one that measures, why is there Law for those who do deeds?

Your son killed my son and then was harmed by me. You would
55 certainly capture me immediately, king. Out of grief for my son I did your son an evil, so you will certainly attack me. Listen to the truth of what I say. Men try to get birds in order to eat them or to amuse themselves with them. There is no third kind of relationship that suits besides killing and holding captive.

Out of their fear of being slain or held captive, some have come to be preoccupied with Escape. Men who know Law say that misery comes from death and calamity. Life is dear to everyone, sons are dear to everyone, everyone fears misery, everyone wants pleasure. Brahmadatta, old age is misery, the loss of wealth is misery, living with someone you do not like
60 is misery, separation from someone you do like is misery. For a living being, misery—whether from enmity or captivity, produced from an injury, or caused by a woman—always alternates with happiness. Some stupid men say there is no misery in another's misery; only he who knows nothing of misery prattles like this about people in general. How could anyone who

has grieved, who has been afflicted with misery, talk like this? He who knows the essence of all misery knows it in another as well in himself.

O tamer of your enemies, king, what I have done to you and what you have done to me could not be expiated in hundreds of years. Because of what the two of us did to each other, there can be no mending of our breach. You will recall your son over and over, and fresh animosity will
65 well up. When someone wants to generate affection while still clinging tightly to animosity, there can be no reconciliation with him, as there is no mending a shattered clay pot.

Those who know the Science of Success have concluded that mistrust leads to happiness. Uśanas once spoke two verses to the Asura king Prahrāda:

> "Those who put faith in the word of their enemy, be it true or the opposite, are slain, as those believing there is honey somewhere may be slain with dried grass-stalks.*
>
> "Feuds do not die down in families until ten Ages of the world have passed. And there are those to tell of it, if there is one person left in the family."

Kings hide their animosities and speak solicitously, then they smash
70 their foe; it's like a filled pot being smashed against a rock.° King, once he has done evil to anyone in this world, a person should never trust the one he has injured. Really, having done injury to others, one only comes to misery from trusting them.

Brahmadatta said:

Without trusting others, men cannot accumulate riches; without trusting others, men cannot strive for anything. Always fearing someone or the other, they will be virtually dead.

Adorable said:

When someone's feet are ulcerous, he limps around on them anyway; but if he runs, even extremely carefully, they hurt.° He who looks up into the wind with sore eyes is sure to get an extreme case of the wind-disease in his eyes. When someone mistakenly starts down a bad road, and then, failing to gauge his strength correctly, he keeps going on it, it ends his life.
75 Again, when someone tills a field without understanding the rains, he will harvest no grain that is deprived so of apt human effort.

When someone always prepares wholesome food, whether sharp or astringent, or devoid of flavor, he is like to never die. But when a man eats a suitable meal and then, paying no heed to the consequences, gluttonously eats a second meal, it ends his life.

* That is, by falling upon sharpened reeds at the bottom of a grass-covered pit; see endnote at 137.67.

Fate and human effort are both ever-present because of their mutual interdependence. Deeds are the main thing for the upper classes, while the weak wait upon fate. One should do deeds that are beneficial to oneself, whether they are harsh or soft. He who is not in the habit of acting for himself ends up with nothing at all and is ever engulfed in evils.

80 Therefore, in any matter involving risk one should act boldly. Men should do what promotes their welfare, even if they give up everything they have.

Wise men say knowledge, bravery, initiative, strength, and fortitude are one's innate friends; it is with them that they make things happen in this world. They say dwellings, useful metals,* land, wives, and allies are available in abundance, that a man can acquire these anywhere.

The wise man enjoys himself everywhere, shines brilliantly everywhere, intimidates no one, and even when someone has given him a scare, he is not afraid.

The wealth of an intelligent man, even a tiny little bit, always increases. He works capably, and he prospers because of his self-restraint.

85 Men of little intelligence, held fast to their homes by affection, have shrewish wives who eat their flesh, the way young crabs split the bodies of their mothers.°† "My house, my fields, my friends, my own land,"° say some men, and they become depressed in their stupidity. But one should flee a country that is distressed or that is afflicted with diseases or famine. He may go to live elsewhere or, ever-honored, he may stay. Therefore, I shall go to live elsewhere; I am not able to stay here. What your son did is unacceptable, prince.

One should keep far away from a bad wife, a bad son, a bad king, a bad

90 friend, a bad relative, and a bad country. There is no trust in a bad friend; how could there be any pleasure in a bad wife? There is no satisfaction in a bad kingdom; no one can make a living in a bad country. There is never any association with a bad friend, whose friendship is inconstant. A bad relative becomes contemptuous when one loses one's wealth.

She is a real wife who says nice things; he is a real son in whom one takes satisfaction; he is a friend whom one can really trust; a real country is a place where one can survive. When there is no oppression with violence, then the king rules with properly strict governance. When he seeks to support the poor, it is not just some personal tie of his own.°

Wife, country, friends, sons, kinsmen, relatives—all of these are

95 excellent when the king looks with the eye of Law. A king who guards his subjects with careful attention is the foundation of the Group of Three; the subjects of the king who does not know Law perish from lack of restraint. Taking a sixth portion as tax, he may levy that tax; but he who does not protect his subjects perfectly is a thief of a prince.

* = metals other than gold and silver.
† Text note: see the first endnote at 137.85.

* He who, by virtue of being the king, has granted safety to beings, but does not do exactly what that calls for,° is an evil-minded man who shall acquire the evil of every person and go to hell.

He who, as king, has granted safety to beings and always does what that calls for should be known as the one who makes everyone happy as he protects all his subjects with Law.

100 Father, mother, teacher, guardian, Fire, Vaiśravaṇa, and Yama, Lord of Death—the Progenitor Manu declared these seven types of king. Indeed, the king is the father of the country, as he is sympathetic to his subjects. And should he lead falsely, men become animals in their next lives. He nurtures his subjects like a mother and bends down to the wretched. He burns evil ones like Fire. Restraining† his subjects, he is Yama. He sends riches forth among the good like Kubera,‡ the granter of wishes. He is a teacher by his lessons in Law, and a guardian by his watching over his subjects.

The king who pleases the people of the city and the countryside with his virtues never loses his kingdom, because he watches over his subjects excellently and in accordance with Law. Becoming familiar himself with the activities of his subjects in the city and the countryside, the king

105 delights happily in this world and the next. The king whose subjects are constantly worried, or oppressed by the burden of taxes, or who are disturbed by various evils goes to perdition. The king whose subjects thrive like a great lotus in a pond enjoys the fruits of all the rites of sacrificial worship and is exalted in heaven.

Conflict with a mighty man is not at all recommended, king. How can he who is in conflict with a mighty man have a kingdom? How can he be happy?

Bhīṣma said:

When the bird had said these things to King Brahmadatta she took her leave of the king and went off in the direction she fancied. So, best of the Bharatas, I have told you what Adorable said to Brahmadatta, what more would you like to hear?

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

138.1 Bhārata, how does one stand firm with Law dwindling away as the Ages pass and as the world is oppressed by barbarians?

Bhīṣma said:

Ah, well, I shall tell you the practical policy for times of distress, Bhārata, when a king may carry on just by discarding tenderness at the

* One upajāti triṣṭubh.
† = *yamayan*. ‡ = Vaiśravaṇa.

right time. On this they recite the ancient account of a conversation between the seer Bharadvāja and King Śatruṃtapa.

The king of the Sauvīras° was a great warrior named Śatruṃtapa. He approached Kaṇiṅka° and questioned him on the learned determinations regarding success in practical affairs. "How might one try to get what one does not have? How can it grow greater when one does get it? And how does one preserve it when it has grown great? How does one use it when he has preserved it?"

The brahmin, who knew the learned determinations on the practical matters asked about, made this reasoned answer in order to declare those conclusions to him.

"The king should always have the rod of force ready; his manly prowess should always be displayed; having no weak points himself, he should be aware of the weak points of others; he should seek out openings against his enemies. People fear very much the king who always has the rod of force ready, so he should hold all beings back with force. That is exactly what the learned men who see the fundamental truths of these matters recommend; therefore among these four the principal one is said to be force.

"When a platform has its base cut down, all those living upon it are slain. How would the branches remain when the tree's roots have been cut? A wise man would cut the base of his enemy's side first, then he should make his enemy's companions and his entire party follow after him.

"Any time there are preliminary indications of crises, he should do what is best advised, what is most bold, what is hardest fought, what is safest, and he should not hesitate.

"He should be polite just with his words, but in his heart he should be like a razor. He should speak with smooth words and never indulge in lust or anger.

"Having made an alliance in some business involving a rival, he should not trust him. The savvy king would withdraw from that alliance immediately when the business has been done.

"He should propitiate his enemy with conciliation, seeming to be a friend. But he should always be worried about him, as of a serpent that has entered his house.

"Him whose intelligence he can insult, he should conciliate with reference to the past; him who is unwise, with reference to the future; the learned man, with reference to what is present.

"The king who seeks prosperity should fold his hands in supplication, swear oaths, be propitious, and bow his head when he speaks; he should even shed tears.

"He should carry his enemy on his shoulder until the right time comes round. And when the right Time has come, he should smash that enemy as he would smash a clay pot against a rock.

"For a while, O king of kings, he should burn like coals of resinous ebony°—the man should put out smoke for a long time, rather than burn hot without flame like a fire of dry chaff.

"He should never pursue any matter of significance with an inept ingrate—only while the business is underway can he be appreciated; he is despised when the task is done. So one should make sure that all his tasks leave some remainder yet to be done.

"He should pursue the particular points of excellence of the cuckoo, of the boar, of Mount Meru, of an empty house, of a beast of prey, and of an actor.°

"Intently engaged at all times, leaping into action over and over, he should go to his enemy's house. He should ask him if he is well, or if, perhaps, he is unwell. Those who are lazy do not gain their ends, nor do the weak, nor do the proud, nor do those who are afraid of what everyone will say, nor do those who are perpetually waiting.

"His enemy should not know his weak point, but he should know his enemy's weak point. He should hide and protect any weakness of his own the way a turtle does its limbs.

"He should think matters over deliberately as the heron does. He should attack boldly like a lion. He should maul like a wolf. He should run away like a rabbit.

"Drinking, dicing, women, hunting, and singing and dancing—the king may engage in these in fitting ways, but an addiction to any one of them is wrong.

"He should turn his bow into a stalk of grass and he should sleep the sleep of his prey.° Let him be blind when there is occasion for blindness, and he might even resort to being deaf.

"The savvy king attacks when he gets the right time and the right place. An attack made when the right time and place have passed would be fruitless. Having reflected upon the right time and the wrong time, and upon his own strengths and weaknesses, and being cognizant of his and his enemy's relative strengths, he may commit himself to it.

"The king who does not restrain the enemy whom he has bent down with the rod of force sits holding death to his bosom, like a mule with a foal in her belly.°

" 'The tree with many flowers may have no fruit.'° 'The tree with much fruit may be hard to climb.' 'The fruit that looks ripe may be unripe.' 'The fruit may not shake down for anyone.' Let him suggest some wish* that depends upon time; then he should pose an obstacle to that wish; then let him declare the obstacle to arise from some particular circumstance, and then let him declare the circumstance is due to some cause.

"As long as the danger lies in the future, he should plan for it as if he

* That is, to his enemy.

were a coward. But when he sees a danger that has arrived, he should attack fearlessly.

"No man sees blessings if he has not run some risks; on the other hand, if he runs some risk, he sees blessings, if he survives.

35 "He should analyze dangers that lie in the future, check any danger which is at hand, and then take careful note of whatever develops with regard to its growing back or disappearing.

"It is not the policy of intelligent men to eschew happiness that is presently at hand while wishing for happiness in the future.

"He who makes a treaty with his enemy and then sleeps happily in confidence is like someone who falls asleep at the top of a tree who will awaken when he falls.

"One should lift his sad soul up with some deed gentle or harsh, and if he is able, it should be a Lawful act he does.°

"He should baby all the rivals of his rivals.°

"He should recognize his own spies and those set by his enemies.

40 "He should commission well-situated spies in his own country and in his enemy's; he should have heretics, ascetics, and so forth sent into his enemy's country.

"Spies are wicked men who offend against Law;° they are the enemies of everyone. They gather in gardens, parks, watering spots along the roads, hostels, taverns, brothels, bathing sites, and assembly halls; recognizing them, the king should curb them, or even put an end to them.

"He should not trust another who does not trust him, nor trust another even if he does trust him. Danger follows after one who trusts. He should never trust anyone without a careful examination. Having made his enemy trust him with arguments that get at the fundamental truths, he should then attack him when the time is right, when his position has been

45 shaken somewhat. He should be apprehensive even of him who is beyond suspicion, and he should always be suspicious of him who is apprehensive of him. For danger always arises from one who is apprehensive; he should cut it* down together with its root.

"Having made his enemy trust him by how intent he is, by his silence, by his ochre-colored robe, by the coils of hair upon his head, and by his antelope skin,† he should maul him like a wolf.

"Those who create obstacles to one's interests and thus trim his wealth—be they son, brother, father, or friend—shall be slain.

"The rod of punishment is the ruler, even for an arrogant teacher who does not know what may be done and what not, who has gotten onto the wrong path.

"Like a bird with a sharp beak,° he should strike at his enemy's heaps of

* = danger. † These are insignia of ascetics.

abundance by rising up against him, by criticizing him, and by offering bribes.

50 "One does not gain the highest Royal Splendor without having cleft the weak spots of his enemies, without having done cruel deeds, without having killed as the fisherman kills.

"No one is one's enemy by birth, no one is one's friend by birth.° Friends and enemies are produced through the application of people's different capabilities.

"He should not let his enemy go free, even if that one is uttering mournful laments. He should not impose any misery upon him. He should slay one who has harmed him earlier.

"The king who seeks prosperity should always exert himself unstintingly to give support and perform favors. Punishment, too, should be administered energetically.

"When about to attack he should say something pleasant, and even after he has attacked he should say something pleasant again; having cut off his enemy's head, he should lament, or even grieve.

55 "The king who seeks prosperity should woo his enemy with propitiation, honors, and forbearance, telling him, 'This has to be done to realize your wishes.'

"One should not quarrel over meaningless trivialities; one should not swim across a river.° The eating of cowhorns is useless and debilitating°—one's teeth are ground to pieccs, and one does not even get its essence.

"Within the Group of Three* there are three kinds of harm and there are three linkages;° being aware of the possible elimination of his interests and of their linkages, he should be able to avoid damage to any of them.

"Any remnant of a debt, any remnant of a fire, and any remnant of one's enemy will just keep growing and growing until what was tiny has become irresistible.

"A debt that keeps increasing and enemies that have been defeated bring terrific misfortune, like diseases that have been neglected.

60 "One should not be someone who does things incompletely, one should always be very careful. Even a little thorn causes a long-lasting injury when it has been badly cut out. The king should ruin his enemy's country by slaying his men, by ruining his roads, by destroying his mines.

"Fearless, the king should act with the far-seeing vision of the vulture, with the fixed stooping and watching of the heron, with the activity-level of the dog,° with the boldness of the lion, with the crow's sense of apprehension, and the snake's movement.

"While sowing dissension among the principal tradesmen and directing blandishments at those who love him, the king should keep his ministers

* Law, Success, and Pleasure.

and advisors from becoming alienated from him and from forming alliances among themselves.

"When they think, 'He is gentle,' they despise him; or, 'He is harsh,' and they fear him—the king should be harsh when there is occasion
65 for harshness and gentle when there is occasion for gentleness. With gentleness do they slay him who is too gentle; and they slay him who is harsh with gentleness too. There is nothing whatsoever that cannot be attained through gentleness, so gentleness is the harder one of the two. The king who is gentle at the right time and harsh at the right time accomplishes the things he sets out to do and dominates his enemies.

"When he is opposed by a crafty enemy, he should not feel confident thinking, 'I am far away from him.' The arms of an intelligent man are long, and he causes damage with them when he has been injured.

> * "He should not cross when he may not be able to get out on
> the further shore; he should not take what his enemy might
> take back; he should not excavate anything when he cannot
> dig up its base; he should not attack anyone whose head he
> would not chop off.
>
> "Thus this statement infused with wickedly deceitful ways has
> been declared to you. A man should not behave this way. But,
> 'How might one learn what his enemy is up to?' So I, who am
> concerned for your welfare, have declared this to you.
>
> 70 "Then, when he had heard this helpful speech declared by the
> brahmin, the king of the country of Suvīra, his mind cheerful,
> did as he had been told and enjoyed radiantly splendid richness
> along with his relatives."

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

139.1 When the most meritorious forms of Law are not available,° when every kind of people transgresses Law; when Wrong is converted into Right, and Right has become Wrong; when all the laws have been shattered into bits; when the resolve to do Right has been shaken; when the world is oppressed by kings or thieves, O lord of peoples; when all the religious Patterns of Life are jumbled up; when rites are obstructed; when everyone faces danger from lust, error, and greed, Bhārata; when none feel trust and are constantly fearful, prince; when everyone is being assaulted by deceit, and
5 everybody is cheating everybody else; when all countries are ablaze and brahmin culture is persecuted; when the God of rain has not rained; when mutual dissension has arisen; when every livelihood upon the earth has

* Three regular jagatī triṣṭubhs.

been taken over by barbarians—when the worst of times has come, how can a brahmin possibly live?

Tell me grandfather, how can one go on in times of distress, one who, out of compassion, is not willing to quit his sons and grandsons?° And how should a king go on when the world has become foul? And how, O scorcher of your enemies, may he do so without losing wealth and Merit?

Bhīṣma said:

People's securing their property and a country's having good rains depend upon the king; so too the occurrence of diseases, death, and dangers
10 among beings. The Kṛta, Tretā, Dvāpara, and Kali Ages too, all depend upon the king, I have no doubt of it, O bull of the Bharatas.

When a time has arrived that makes creatures wicked, one must live by relying on his powers of discernment.° On this they relate this ancient account of a conversation between the seer Viśvāmitra and a Caṇḍāla in a Caṇḍāla hamlet.

Long ago, during the twilight time between the Tretā and Dvāpara Ages, as the ordinance of fate stepped along, there was a terrible, twelve-year drought. When creatures were overgrown at the end of the Age, as
15 the Tretā Age gave way and the Dvāpara took hold, the thousand-eyed God* did not rain, the planet Bṛhaspati, "The Teacher,"† was moving in retrograde, and the moon went onto a southern course, its normal characteristics gone. There was not even any dew at dawn, much less any rows of clouds. The streams of water in the rivers had shrunk, and in some places had disappeared. Lakes, rivers, wells, and waterfalls were seen deprived of all their rippling splendor because fate had drained them.

The earth then became a dried-up pond, a watering spot along the road without any patrons. Veda recitations and rites of sacrificial worship ceased upon it, as did that auspicious formula of offering, "Vaṣaṭ." Cattle-tending and plowing were suspended on the earth, selling and trading ceased, large assemblies of people did not take place, and great festivals
20 disappeared from the earth. Skeletons and bones were scattered here and there on the earth, and it was thronged with trillions of ghosts. Its cities were empty for the most part, and its hamlets and villages were burned up —in some instances by robbers, in some instances when fire was used as a weapon in a conflict, and in some instances by mad kings. Its wilderness areas were empty for the most part, because everyone feared everyone else. Special vows to the Gods were gone from the earth. It was bereft of old people and children, it was bereft of cattle, sheep, and buffaloes, and on it everyone took and took back each from the other. Brahmins had been killed, guardians had been killed, and the earth's masses of vegetation had perished. Most of the earth's people had become dark-colored.

* = Indra. † = Jupiter.

25 At this dangerous time, Yudhiṣṭhira, when Law had wasted away, hungry mortals wandered about eating each other. Seers had abandoned their practices of restraint, they had abandoned the Gods and their ritual fires, and, having left their hermitages, they ran about hither and thither.

The blessed Viśvāmitra, a wise seer without a house, was afflicted with hunger, and he roamed about in every direction. At some point as he ran about he arrived at a hamlet of violent, animal-killing, dog-eating Caṇḍālas somewhere in the forest.° The hamlet was littered with pieces of broken pottery and myriad dog-hide garments. Lots of broken bones from boars and asses and pots made of skulls were all over. It was bestrewn with wrappings of the dead and with ornaments made of used flowers. There were huts and hovels displaying ensigns garlanded with molted

30 snakeskins, and it was surrounded by shrines to the Gods that flew flags made of the wings of owls. It was embellished with a metal bell, and a pack of dogs guarded it.

Tormented with hunger, that great seer, the son of Gādhi,* entered the hamlet and searched for food intently and very thoroughly. That grandson of Kuśika,† found no meat, no rice, no root-foods, no fruit, nor any other kind of food there anywhere, not even when he begged for it. The grandson of Kuśika concluded, "Ah, woe! I'm really in a desperate situation!" and from weakness he fell to the ground there in the Caṇḍāla hamlet. O most excellent of princes, that sage thought, "Do I have no good karma left? How can I avoid just dying pointlessly?"

35 Then the sage saw a dirty rope stretched across a Caṇḍāla's house with butchered dog-meat on it. At that moment he thought, "I must steal this, for right now there is no other way to maintain the breath of life. Stealing is ordained during times of distress according to who is superior, who is equal, and who is lower; as it goes° to each one of these three in succession, there should be no stealing from one mentioned earlier—that is the determination. First of all, one might take from one who is lower; next from one who is equal. One might, because of the impossibility of surviving otherwise, take even from someone who is superior, even if he is someone who lives according to Law. I am taking something from the belongings of those at the bottom of society,° and I do not see any crime of stealing in it. I will take this meat."

40 Having taken this resolve the great sage Viśvāmitra fell asleep there on the spot where he had fallen. When he saw the night well advanced as the Caṇḍāla hamlet slept, the blessed one stealthily got up and entered that hovel. That Caṇḍāla sleeping there, his eyes crusted with mucus, snoring, filthy, awful-looking, then said, "Who moves my dirty rope while the whole hamlet sleeps? I am awake! I am not sleeping! I have no mercy, and you are dead!"

* = Viśvāmitra. † = Viśvāmitra.

The sage was instantly frightened and worried at his doing this. He said

45 to him immediately, "I am Viśvāmitra." When the Caṇḍāla heard this from the great seer whose mind was completely perfected, he was confused, and he wanted to jump up from his prone position. He got rid of the mucus from his eyes, and, folding his hands deferentially out of great respect, he said to the grandson of Kuśika, "Brahmin, what is it you are trying to do here in the middle of the night?"

> Viśvāmitra said to the Mātaṅga* soothingly, "I am hungry. My life-breath is gone. I will take a dog's hind end.°
>
> "On account of hunger my life-breaths are subsiding, my memory is disappearing. Even though I understand my proper Law, I will take a dog's hind end.
>
> "Wandering around, I found no food until I saw some in your house. Then my mind was set to do wrong. I will take a dog's hind end.
>
> 50 "A thirsty man will drink filth. A man seeking food has no shame. Hunger corrupts Law here. I will take a dog's hind end.
>
> "The clean-stepping Lord Fire is the mouth of the Gods and their house-priest; just as that one who eats everything† is still a brahmin, so know me in terms of Law."

The Caṇḍāla then said to him, "Great seer, listen to what I have to say, and then do as I say so you will not lose Merit. The experts say that the dog is the lowest of all animals, and the lowest part of its body is its haunch and hind end.° You did not decide rightly, great seer, when you resolved to do this grotesque deed, taking something that belongs to a Caṇḍāla,

55 particularly as it is food forbidden to you. Good man, look for some other means to maintain your life-breath. You should not ruin the merit of your asceticism out of a greedy desire for meat, great sage. You know this way is forbidden to you. You ought not cause a mixing of different Laws. Do not abandon Law; you are the final knower of Law."°

King, bull of the Bharatas, the starving seer Viśvāmitra answered him again° and said this. "I have been running about without any food for a very long time, and I have found no means whatsoever to maintain my life-breath. One who is perishing should stay alive by whatever extraordinary

60 deed he can do. He should do a Lawful Deed, if he is able.° The Law of Indra is for kṣatriyas and that of Fire is for brahmins. The fire of *brahman* is my strength. I will eat ordinarily, out‡ of hunger. One should willingly° do whatever may be required to stay alive. Life is better than death. Only one

* = Caṇḍāla. † That is, Fire, Agni.
‡ = *samayam*, that is, according to mere convention; apart from dharma.

who is living can obtain the Merit of Lawful Deeds. I, desiring to live, have consciously decided to eat even what I am not supposed to eat. Figure it out for yourself, sir. Alive, I shall do Lawful Deeds, and by asceticism and learning I shall drive the impurities away from myself, the way the stars drive off the vast darkness."

The dog-eating Caṇḍāla said:

* If you eat this, you will not get more life-breath, nor long life,
nor the refreshment of the God's ambrosia. Get other alms.
Decide against eating the dog. Brahmins are not supposed to
eat dogs.

Viśvāmitra said:

65 † Caṇḍāla, there is no other meat to be had in this famine. Nor
any rice. I have found nothing at all. I am starving, I can
hardly move, I am desperate. Good man, this dog-flesh will
have all the six flavors, I think.

The dog-eating Caṇḍāla said:
Brahmin, brahmins and kṣatriyas are permitted to eat only the five five-clawed animals.° If the learned handbooks have authority for you, then decide against eating forbidden food.

Viśvāmitra said:
The Asura Vātāpi was eaten by the seer Agastya when he was hungry.‡ I am in a situation of distress, I am desperately upset, and I will eat the hind end of a dog.

The dog-eating Caṇḍāla said:
Take other alms. You should not do this. This really shouldn't be done! Well, take the dog's hind end, if you like.

Viśvāmitra said:
Well-educated men are the basis of Law; I will imitate what they have done.§ I regard this dog's hind end as better food than what is eaten from a sacrificial offering.

The dog-eating Caṇḍāla said:
70 What someone not strictly observant has done is not everlasting Law. Improper behavior is not to be imitated. Do not do wrong on the basis of a fallacious argument.

* Two triṣṭubhs; this stanza is made up of four nearly perfectly classical śālinī triṣṭubh verses.
† The fourth verse of this stanza is hypermetric; the quantitative pattern in all four verses is very close to the classical vātormī triṣṭubh pattern.
‡ See *MBh* 3.97; van Buitenen, 2: 415 f.
§ He refers to Agastya, according to Nīlakaṇṭha.

Viśvāmitra said:
Being a seer, one would not do anything sinful, nor anything despicable. I judge dog and deer to be the same;° therefore the dog's hind end may be eaten.

The dog-eating Caṇḍāla said:

* What someone who has been solicited by a brahmin had
made for the sake of that brahmin† is subject to being eaten by
that seer. Law is that in which there is no evil, and it must be
kept that way by any and all means.

Viśvāmitra said:

This body is a brahmin, and it is my friend; it is dear to me and
is the most highly honored kind of body in this world. As I
want to maintain it, I will take this. I have no fear of such
cruelties.°

The dog-eating Caṇḍāla said:

As you will. Men do give up their lives and refuse to save
themselves with forbidden foods; they obtain all their wishes
in this world. Learned man, delight yourself as you wish,
having suffered your hunger.

Viśvāmitra said:

75 Certainly there is that risk about my station in the next life; or
maybe all the consequences of one's deeds just disappear.° But
I do have a body that always forms the basis of my doing pious
deeds;°‡ I will preserve that base and eat the forbidden food.°

I am satisfied° that it§ is separate from the mental apparatus,
as skin‖ and sight are separate; the idea they are one and the
same is the result of error. So even if I do commit sin in my
uncertainty, I will not turn into someone like you.

The dog-eating Caṇḍāla said:
My thought is that this is a grievously bad sin, that I, an evil-doer, am scolding you, though you are a brahmin.

* Five stanzas of irregular triṣṭubhs. † Further reference to the Agastya story.
‡ Text note: see second endnote at 139.75.
§ = his "foundation" *(mūla)*: the body and the physical matter put into it.
‖ The skin of the eyeball.

Viśvāmitra said:
Cows drink water even with frogs croaking nearby. You have no right to do Lawful Deeds;* do not be too pleased with yourself.
The dog-eating Caṇḍāla said:
I command you as your friend. I feel sympathy for you, brahmin. Accept this as what is best: Do not eat° the dog just because you crave it.
Viśvāmitra said:
80 If you are my friend, who wants to secure my comfort, then get me out of this distress. I know my own self with regard to Law; let go of that dog's hind end.

The dog-eating Caṇḍāla said:

† I am not able to give this to you, sir. Nor am I able to ignore
my own food being stolen. We would both be smeared with
stains—I as the giver and you, brahmin, as the receiver.

Viśvāmitra said:

After doing this wicked deed today, if I am still alive, I will
perform a great purifying ritual. Or, keeping my soul
completely pure, I will gain Merit. Tell me now, which of
these two is more important?

The dog-eating Caṇḍāla said:

The soul is supposed to be the witness of everything done in the
world. You know what is rotten in this. I think anyone who
would regard dog flesh as "permissible food" would exclude
nothing as food.

Viśvāmitra said:

There is wrong in taking it or in eating it; and exceptions must
always be made here in accordance with right principles. When
there is no injuring, and not the least utterance of falsehood,
that makes it allowable food.° It is not so grievous then.

The dog-eating Caṇḍāla said:

85 If this is the ground for your eating it, then you do not have the
Vedas for your ground, nor any other Law. So then, O Indra

* He can neither gain Lawful Merit nor commit the kind of sin he has just imagined for himself, a *patanīya*, a sin that deprives someone who is eligible to perform Lawful Deeds of their right to do so. See the endnote to 12.159.35.
† Seven mixed triṣṭubh stanzas.

among brahmins,° I see no fault either in the forbidden food or
from your eating it, just as you say.

Viśvāmitra said:

Eating this is not observed to be a sin that degrades one's status.
"After drinking spirits one goes down in status," is just
something people here say. And it is just so with other deeds
and corresponding pronouncements. The deed I am about to
do will not do the least bit of harm.

The dog-eating Caṇḍāla said:

Right conduct keeps a learned man from going to a place he
should not be, from doing a vile deed, and from being criticized.
But he who goes to the place anyway out of some attachment is
liable to be punished just for that.

Bhīṣma said:
Once he had said this to Kauśika, the Mātaṅga stopped. Viśvāmitra, his mind made up, took that dog's hind end. The great sage took that five-part haunch just to stay alive and then went to the forest along with his wife.
90 Then, at the very same time, Vāsava* rained, reviving all creatures and producing plants. After a long time the blessed Viśvāmitra, having burned up his sin with asceticism, attained a supremely marvelous perfection.
Someone in the midst of a crisis who is desperate to stay alive may save his overstressed body by any means possible if his mind is not afflicted and he understands things in this way. One must resort to this understanding and survive; so it should always be. If he is alive, a man gains merit and sees blessings. Therefore, O son of Kuntī, given this determination of what is Lawful and not Lawful by a learned man, a man of disciplined spirit should resort to this understanding and keep going in this world.
Yudhiṣṭhira said:
140.1 That horrible thing you have described seems like an unacceptable violation. This is barbarian law, which I shun. I am dumbfounded, I am stunned, my sense of Law is completely undone.
I can't go on now, as this keeps bothering me somehow.
Bhīṣma said:
The instruction I give you in Law does not come simply from pure tradition. It is a grand passage to wisdom, it is honey collected from different sources by wise seers. The king must make use of many wise insights from here and there. The world's onward movement does not
5 occur with a Law which has just one branch. Victory belongs to the kings

* = Indra.

who always act according to Laws derived by means of intelligent insights.° Understand what I am saying now, Kaurava. Victory-seeking kings who hold intelligent insight to be best of all are the ones who are victorious. Using intelligent insight, the king should make use of Law that comes from here and there. The Law of kings was not ordained as a Law made up of just one branch.

Why is it that the wisdom for someone weak[*] has not been declared before this? He who has no awareness of what is twofold is likely to be confounded when on a path that is twofold.[†] It certainly should have been realized before now, Bhārata, that there are two levels of understanding. Wisdom is an instrument that stands at one's side, but it goes everywhere; it is just like a stream. A man must thoroughly understand—in this alternative way and in that alternative way—the Law which has been declared. Some have an understanding that is perfect; others have an understanding that is false. Taking this properly into account, one appropriates the teaching of those that are strictly virtuous.

The enemies of Law steal the Learned Teachings° and explain them as being harsh because their understandings of practical matters are nonsensical. The most wicked of men, these enemies of Law seek to live off of learning and they lust for glory from every side. Foolish men with half-baked ideas, ever unsophisticated in the Learned Teachings, unaccomplished in everything they do, they do not understand correctly. Keeping in view only the wrongs that are taught in the Learned Teachings, they steal those teachings. Their understanding of the teachings goes, "That is not right." They make their own teachings known only by their criticism of the teachings of others. Having taken a mouthful of metal blades for words,° they speak in sharp darts and arrows; they seem to have milked the cow of learning dry. Bhārata, know them to be hawkers of learning who are like Rākṣasas. The whole known Law is mocked by them as a fraud. "We have learned from you no proclamation of Law, neither in word nor in spirit": so did Maghavan[‡] himself say of Bṛhaspati's teaching.

But in this world there is no statement[§] whatsoever that was uttered without a reason; thus some decide their meanings in accordance with a Learned Tradition as it has been taught to them. But then there are some experts who declare Law to be merely the world's movement.[‖]

A learned man cannot ponder the Law that has been taught among the strictly virtuous all by himself,° because he would grow impatient, because

[*] Inability to act according to the stated norm (dharma) is the premise of *āpaddharma*.
[†] = the path of Law, which may differ according to capability.
[‡] = Indra.
[§] Presumably "statement of Law," as just above in 16c; this śloka is evidently a defensive counter to the diatribe against the dharma-pundits.
[‖] That is, "Law is nothing more than what people actually do"; evidently a skeptical rebuttal of the immediately preceding.

he would be confused by the Learned Tradition, and because he would not understand it completely, Bhārata. But when a wise man is declaring it[*] in concert with others, the Learned Tradition becomes invisible; it[†] is then recommended by the tradition as the tradition has been actually received, by the intelligent insights of the speaker, and by the discussion. One judges a statement to be right because it produces understanding from non-understanding. "This has not been refuted. This command is not useless." Just as once in the past Uśanas declared to the Daityas (to resolve a doubt they had) that knowledge cannot be represented, so it is with this knowledge here.[‡] Whom should you[§] satisfy with this,[‖] with its severed root? You, who would not recognize this statement as falsely formulated?

Indeed, you have been created for fierce deeds, but you pay that no heed. Here, now! Pay heed to the practical policy of kings in order to flourish, this policy with which that other one[#] escaped and on account of which he rejoices. "The goat, the horse, the *kṣatra*," was made like this[**] by Brahmā. Because of it[††] those who are not fierce manage some sort of active life.

Now tradition teaches that the fault in killing one who should not be killed is the same as in not killing one who should be killed. This is certainly a law, which that one[‡‡] would eschew.[§§] Therefore the tough king must make his subjects stay in their own Duties, for otherwise, they would live by consuming each other like wolves. The king in whose country tribes of barbarians steal the property of others the way crows steal fishes from the water is a disgrace to all kṣatriyas.

Having chosen as one's companions men of good families, who are imbued with Vedic learning, rule the earth, king, protecting your subjects with Law. The king who favors a man born of degenerates who does not do his work, the king who is not aware of the difference between the two, is a eunuch of a kṣatriya. Neither the gruesome nor the non-gruesome is recommended by Law. One should not transgress in either way—having been gruesome, he should be gentle. This law of kṣatriyas is harsh. What is in you is amiability. But you have been created for fierce deeds; therefore rule the kingdom. "Constantly restraining the uninstructed and protecting

[*] = some particular requirement of Law, dharma.
[†] = the particular requirement of Law.
[‡] Static scholastic representations of knowledge and Law are not effective; a living process of application and interpretation is necessary.
[§] Presumably Yudhiṣṭhira is being addressed here by Bhīṣma.
[‖] = Yudhiṣṭhira's narrow, scholastic rule of Law (above, 140.1–2), one resembling the Caṇḍāla's in the last chapter.
[#] Presumably Viśvāmitra: the practical policy of kings being that doing "fierce deeds" for the survival of oneself and others takes precedence over all else.
[**] For being sacrificed for others (Belvalkar).
[††] = the *kṣatra*.
[‡‡] = one of the barbarians mentioned by Yudhiṣṭhira at the outset.
[§§] That is, barbarians would not use governmental coercion to enforce normative behavior.

the instructed," is what the wise Śakra told them in times of distress, O bull of the Bharatas.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

Is there any law of the barbarians that others should never violate?°
I ask you, O best of the strictly observant, tell me that, grandfather.

Bhīṣma said:

35 One should serve brahmins who are steeped in learning, who are devoted to asceticism, who are richly endowed in the way of life and deeds taught in tradition—this is the highest purifier. The way one behaves toward the Gods is how one should behave toward the brahmins too, in every respect. The deeds done by brahmins who are enraged are greatly magnified. One's principal fame comes by favoring them, and the opposite comes from not favoring them. Brahmins are like nectar when favored; when they are angry they are like poison.

12(85a) The Conversation between the Pigeon and the Fowler

141–45 (B. 143–49; C. 5459–5595)
141 (143; 5459). Yudhiṣṭhira asks what Merit there is in granting refuge to those who seek it. Bhīṣma assures him there is great Merit in granting refuge and tells him the story of the pigeon and the fowler, a story on the Merit of giving protection to supplicants, a story first told by a Bhārgava sage to King Mucukunda (1–5). There was once a wicked black hunter who lived in a forest by selling bird flesh (10–15). A tremendous storm came that flooded the forest and sent all its inhabitants scrambling for dry land. The hunter wandered through the woods, eventually taking refuge beneath a large tree (15–25).
142 (144–46; 5493–5549). A pair of pigeons lived in that tree, but the female had not returned after the storm and the flood. The male worried and lamented the possible loss of his wife (1–10). But his wife had been caught in a trap and was listening to his lament. She then urged her husband to give refuge to the hungry and cold fowler, assuring him that that was the right thing for him to do (10–15). The male pigeon was overjoyed to hear his wife's voice, and he honored the fowler with due hospitality. He brought dry leaves and fire to warm the cold fowler. The fowler asked for food, but the bird had none to offer him. The bird then decided to offer himself as food, and he entered the fire. The fowler was shocked and ashamed at having caused his host's death (20–40).
143 (147; 5550). The fowler lamented his cruel way of life (1). Struck by the pigeon's commitment to Law, the fowler resolved to do Lawful Deeds too. He vowed to dry his body up with asceticism by making the Great Journey (5–10).
144 (148; 5561). The female pigeon lamented her dead mate, praising his unmeasured love of her (1–5). She entered the fire too and then saw her husband up above in marvelous celestial garb. He was in a flying chariot and was being hailed by exalted saints. She joined him in heaven (5–10).
145 (149; 5574). The fowler saw the two birds in the celestial chariot and was anxious about his own fate in the world beyond. He kept traveling the Great Journey (1). Traveling through a woods, he got caught in a great forest fire, was burned to death, and went to heaven, having attained the very highest perfection (5–10). Bhīṣma sums up the morals of the story: Law is great because it allows for the expiation of great evil, but there is no expiation for slaying a supplicant (10–15).

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

141.1 Grandfather of great wisdom, conversant in all the Learned Traditions, tell me what is the Merit for someone who offers refuge to another?

Bhīṣma said:

There is great Merit, great king, in offering refuge to another. It becomes you, sir, most excellent of the Bharatas, to ask this question. Kings from Nṛga onward went on to the very highest perfection after they granted protection to those who came to them for refuge. We have heard of a pigeon who duly honored his enemy when that enemy had come for refuge, and even summoned his enemy to feast on his flesh.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

5 How did a pigeon make his enemy eat his flesh when the enemy had come for refuge? And what course in the afterlife did the pigeon gain by this, Bhārata?

Bhīṣma said:

Listen, king, to this marvelous story that gets rid of all one's evil, a story a Bhārgava told to King Mucukunda. Pārtha, bull of the Bharatas, King Mucukunda once humbly questioned a descendant of Bhṛgu about this matter. The Bhārgava recounted to the eagerly listening king this story of how a pigeon gained perfection, a story that carries a specific lesson on Law and which is also pertinent to Success and Love. Listen attentively while I tell it to you, strong-armed king.

10 There was a man of vile deeds who roamed the land, a horrible, wicked hunter of birds who was regarded as Time himself upon the earth. His body as black as a raven's, he was cruel and intent upon doing evil. He was roly-poly like a grain of barley and had a skinny neck, little feet, and puffy cheeks. He had no friends, no kinsmen, no affines—they had all abandoned him because of his horrible occupation. King, he would use his net, kill the birds in the forest, and then sell them. This wicked man lived in 15 this wicked way for a very long time, and he never realized his evil. He always had the pleasure of his wife's company, and no other way of life appealed to him, deluded as he was by the operation of fate.

Once when he was in the forest a tremendous whirlwind came up that almost knocked the trees down. The sky was filled with clouds fringed with flashes of lightning; it was completely covered for a very long time, like the ocean with a flotilla of boats. Śatakratu* was overjoyed with all those torrents of water and in an instant he flooded the earth. With the earth awash in floods, the hunter wandered all through the forest in a panic; he 20 was freezing with the cold, and his mind was deranged. The bird-killer found no gorges or valleys draining off the rain, nor any high ground above the flood; the way through the forest was filled with the flood of water. At this time the birds were hit by the force of the wind, and they vanished. Some deer, lions, and boars had gotten to high spots of dry land and were standing on them. The denizens of the forest were terrified by the great storm; frightened and hungry, they wandered through the forest together.

Shivering with cold, the hunter kept going and did not stop. Then, amidst the thickets in the woods, he noticed a tree looming dark as a raincloud; against the clear sky that was chock full of stars it looked like a lotus. Having observed that the sky was completely cloudless, the evil 25 hunter, still bothered by the cold, looked around the entire sweep of the horizon. Thinking, "The hamlet of my village is a long ways from this place," he decided to spend that night in the woods. Folding his hands in supplication, he solemnly addressed that tree, "I seek refuge from whatever Gods are here." Then, Bhārata, the bird-killer scattered some leaves around at the foot of the tree, laid his head upon a stone, and went to sleep in great discomfort.

Bhīṣma said:

142.1 A bird with lovely feathers had lived with his friends in the branches of that tree for a long time. His wife had gone at the break of day to feed, and she had not come back. Upon the fall of night the bird became very anxious. "There was a great storm, and now my dear does not return. Could that be the reason she hasn't yet come back? I hope everything is all right with my dear in the forest. Without her this home of mine is empty

* = Indra.

5 now. She had red circles round her eyes, her limbs were lovely, and her coos were sweet. If my love does not return, there will be no use in my living. This virtuous woman was devoted to the Law of a wife, and she is more important to me than my life itself. She takes great pains when she knows I am tired or hungry. The man° who has such a devoted and kindly wife, who is so dedicated to her husband and so affectionate, is a fortunate man upon this earth. It is written that his wife is a man's supreme help in this life. The man who has no mate goes a lonely way in the world. And for the man who has been overtaken by illness, or who has gotten into 10 difficulties, there is never any remedy equal to his wife. There is no social connection equal to one's wife, there is no recourse equal to one's wife, there is no companion for realizing Merit in the world equal to one's wife."

As the afflicted bird lamented like this, his wife, who had been caught in a trap,° listened to his speech. "She whose husband is not content would not be termed 'woman.' What he says is being witnessed by the God Fire. A husband really is a woman's refuge." So did this poor miserable bird think of her poor, miserable husband. Then the pigeon-hen, wary of the fowler, said, "Hey! I will tell you what is best to do. Listen, and then do as I say. Beloved, the most important thing is to be his savior when he seeks refuge. 15 This fowler has repaired to your dwelling and lies there, freezing and hungry. Treat him with respect. Anyone who would kill someone who has come to him for refuge has the same sin as one who kills a brahmin* or a cow, the mother of the world. The pigeon way of life° has been ordained for us in accordance with the Law of species; it is fitting it always be pursued by one such as you, who is fully self-possessed. The householder who follows Law to the extent he is able gains, after he dies, celestial worlds that never decay; so have we heard. You have insured your lineage now, bird, as you have sons, so let go of all fondness for your own body, take hold of Law and Profit, and treat him with such respect that his heart will be pleased."

20 The tormented bird in the fowler's net said this, and then, terribly miserable, she looked up at her husband. When he had heard his wife's statement so full of reasoning based on Law, the bird was overjoyed, and his eyes filled with tears. That bird looked upon that fowler, who lived upon birds, and then honored him attentively in accordance with the prescribed rites. He said, "Welcome! What might I do for you? You are in my house, sir, and you should experience no discomfort. You must tell me right away, sir, what I can do for you. What do you want? I speak to you 25 sincerely, for you have come to me for refuge. It is especially important that a householder who carries out the five 'sacrifices'° scrupulously offer the hospitable treatment due to guests to anyone who comes to him for refuge. Should he who lives in the religious Life-Pattern of a householder fail, out of error, to offer the five 'sacrifices,' he has neither this world nor the next

* The word used for brahmin here, *dvija*, is a word that also means "bird."

one as a result of the Merit of doing Law. So speak to me freely. Whatever you expressly tell me, I will do all of it for you. Do not give yourself up to grief."

The hunter replied to what the bird said. "The cold is killing me! You've got to save me from the cold." Told this, the bird strewed the driest leaves 30 he could get on the ground, and then he went swiftly to get fire. He went to a charcoal-works, took some fire, returned, and worked and worked to kindle a fire in the dry leaves. After making a large blaze he said to his supplicant, "Warm your limbs here completely at your ease, with no fear of anything." The hunter agreed and warmed his limbs. Then, revived by the fire, he said to the bird. "I need you to give me some food. I'm starving." The bird replied to this request, "I don't have the ability to get rid of your hunger. We forest-dwellers just live on what grows here. We have no stockpiles of food; we are like the sages who live in the forest."

After he said this, then and there his face paled. "How, I ask, can I do this?" he wondered over and over. O best of the Bharatas, he grew very critical of his way of life.° The bird snapped out of it after a while and then said to that murderer of birds, "I will satisfy you, just wait a minute." The pigeon then made the fire blaze up more with more dry leaves, and then he spoke again, with tremendous joy. "I have learned in the past that honoring a guest is the Great Law of the exalted Gods, sages, and 40 ancestors. Do me a favor now. I speak the truth to you. Know that my mind is set upon honoring my guest." The bird, true to his promise, walked around that fire three times, and then, with the trace of a smile, he entered it, O lord of the earth.

When the hunter saw that the bird had entered the flames, he asked himself, "Did I really do this? O surely, vast and horrible bad karma will be mine since I am so cruel, since my deeds have been so despicable." Having seen the bird go in this way, the hunter lamented like this intensely and at great length, excoriating his past deeds.

Bhīṣma said:

143.1 When he saw that the pigeon had fallen into the fire, the fowler was overwhelmed with pity. Again he spoke, "How was I so cruel to do such a thing, though I did not intend it? This sin will be in my heart constantly as long as I live." Reviling himself, he said over and over, "Damn me, who have been so completely stupid! Who have always been set on doing vile deeds! Who rejected wholesome work and became a hunter of birds! No doubt this is now a warning to me for being so cruel, a warning given by 5 this exalted pigeon who gives me his own flesh! This extraordinarily dutiful pigeon has given me a lesson in Lawful Duty. I shall give up my own dear life, after forsaking my children and my wife. From now on I will dry this body of mine up as if it were a puddle in the summer. I shall avoid all meals. Enduring the pain of hunger and thirst, so emaciated my veins and sinews shall stick out, I shall do what is necessary for the next world with many kinds of fasts. Aah! By giving me his body, this pigeon has shown me

the truly respectful treatment of a guest. So I will now do Lawful Deeds, for doing Meritorious, Lawful Deeds is the highest course to go, that is, those Lawful Deeds which are kept in view by the most Righteous of men, O best of lady birds."

After he said this the hunter resolved upon this terrifying deed. His resolve finely honed, he resorted to the vow of the Great Journey° and set 10 out. He then set aside his staff, his lime-twigs,° his net, and his bird cage, released all his captive pigeons, and left that place.

Bhīṣma said:

144.1 When the fowler had left, the pigeon-hen suffered miserably and wailed as she recalled her husband. Stupefied with grief, she said, "Beloved, I do not remember ever, at any time, an unkindness from you. Bird, every widow woman, even if she has many children, is mourned by her kin when she has lost her husband and is depressed.° You always made me amorous toward you because of your high regard for me. And always you seduced me with the sweet and affectionate things you told me so often to enchant me. In the caves of rocky mountains, in the hurtling torrents of 5 rivers, and in the charming tree-tops I made love with you, dear. I used to play with you, flying through the sky, and you easily made me happy, love—now I have nothing of that.

"What one's father gives is measured, what one's mother gives is measured, and what one's son gives is also measured; so what woman would not honor her husband, who gives what is not measured. There is no protector the equal of one's husband, nor any happiness the equal of one's husband; leaving behind all property that is her own, a woman's refuge is her husband. There is no use to my living here without you, O protector. What strictly virtuous woman could endure to live after she is bereft of her husband."

Lamenting so much and so piteously, the tormented bird so dedicated to 10 her husband entered the blazing fire. Then she saw her husband in an aerial chariot, wearing a beautiful robe, and exalted men who had gone to heaven because of their good deeds were paying homage to him. His robe and his garlands were beautiful, he was adorned with every kind of jewel, and he was surrounded by hundreds of millions of celebrated beings in aerial chariots. Then the bird, who had gone to heaven, was joined by his wife and, honored for his deed, he enjoyed himself there with his wife.

Bhīṣma said:

145.1 The fowler saw the two of them in the flying chariot, and after seeing the husband and wife, he was terribly anxious about making a good passage from this life. "What asceticism might I do to go the course that goes the farthest?" Having turned this over in his mind, he started upon his journey. Walking with no unnecessary motion, eating only wind, free of all sense of personal possession, that hunter who had lived upon birds traveled, having resorted to the vow of the Great Journey in his desire to go to heaven.

Eventually he saw spread out before him a nice, big, charming lake adorned with lotus flowers. It had cool water, and there were flocks of many different kinds of birds around it. He had been suffering from thirst, but when he saw that lake he had no doubt he would be refreshed. Prince, that hunter was extremely emaciated because of his fasting, but he was thrilled with joy as he slowly shuffled toward a wood inhabited by ferocious beasts. The hunter entered, having summoned up a great sense of resolution. But upon entering the wood, he got caught in a thicket of thorns. His limbs shredded by the thorns, his skin wet with blood, he wandered in that wild place where there were many different kinds of animals. Then a tremendous forest fire sprang up in that woods from the rubbing together of the great trees in the wind. The raging blaze seemed like the fire at the end of an Age, and it burned that forest that teemed with trees and crawled with the vines of creepers. Aided by flaming embers blown about by the wind, it horribly burned that forest teeming with animals and birds. The hunter was overjoyed, believing he would get free of his body, so he ran right to where the fire was most intense. The hunter was burned by the fire, and all his sins were destroyed. At that moment he attained the supreme perfection, O most excellent of the Bharatas. Then, free of all bother, he saw himself in heaven, shining like Indra in the middle of Yakṣas, Gandharvas, and perfected seers.

So truly the pigeon and his devoted wife did go to heaven along with the hunter, all because of their virtuous deeds. A woman who follows after her husband as did the pigeon-ḥen° shines in heaven immediately, as did that hen. This happened long ago, that the exalted hunter and the pigeon went the most meritorious way of all Law by their virtuous deeds. Anyone who might listen to this regularly, or anyone who recounts it regularly, will encounter nothing untoward, even if his attention lapses. Yudhiṣṭhira, best of the supporters of Law, this great Law, this expiation of evil deeds, would apply even to slayers of cows in this world. But there is no expiation for him who would slay someone who has come to him for refuge.

12(85b) The Story of King Janamejaya's Accidental Brahmicide

146–48 (150–52; 5595–5674)
146 (150; 5595). Yudhiṣṭhira asks how one can become free of an inadvertent sin. Bhīṣma tells him the story of what the Śaunaka brahmin Indrota told King Janamejaya. The king

had accidentally killed a brahmin and was then shunned by everyone. Tormented, the king went to the forest and performed arduous asceticism (1–5). He sought refuge with the brahmin seer Indrota, bowing down and massaging his feet. The sage, horrified by the king's polluting touch, refused him and scolded him harshly, telling him that he had sent all his ancestors to hell. He himself would go downward in his future lives and suffer great torments (5–15).
147 (151; 5613). Janamejaya agreed with the sage's censure of him. He assured Śaunaka he would serve brahmins in the future as he had in the past. He pleaded that his lineage not die out with him, affirming his need for the ritual services of brahmins. He asked Indrota for advice (1–5). Śaunaka told him that wisdom looks to the present rather than the past, and takes cognizance of the sorrows of others rather than one's own. He urged Janamejaya to perform a ritual counteracting his sin (10). Janamejaya asked Śaunaka to have mercy upon him, and the brahmin called Janamejaya back to Lawful Deeds, stating that some will revile him, Śaunaka, for doing so. He extracted from Janamejaya a promise never to be injurious toward brahmins (15–20).
148 (152; 5635). Śaunaka praised King Janamejaya for his efforts to expiate his offense (1–5). He mentioned different kinds of expiation, praising in particular renunciation and the visiting of different holy places (5–15). He counseled the king against despair, urged him to win paradise by military action and placate the brahmins with gifts, and he repeated various assurances of expiation for various offenses, including abortions (15–30). Bhīṣma then relates that Indrota had the king perform a Horse Sacrifice and that he reentered his kingdom with radiant majesty.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

146.1 When someone does evil without intending to do so, O most excellent of the Bharatas, how can he get free of that sin? Tell me this.

Bhīṣma said:

On this I will tell you the ancient story of what the brahmin Indrota, a descendant of Śunaka's, told to Janamejaya. There was a tremendously heroic king, Janamejaya, descendant of Parikṣit.° That lord of the earth accidentally killed a brahmin. All the brahmins and his house-priests renounced him.° Burning with grief day and night, the king went into the forest. Having been completely forsaken by his subjects, he performed a great rectification: Burning with distress, he performed ascetic deeds beyond measure. I will tell you the story of his reinforcing his Merit.

Burning with grief because of his evil deed, Janamejaya went away. He betook himself to Indrota Śaunaka, who practiced the most finely honed vows. Preparing to solicit the brahmin, he fell at his feet, massaging them. Alarmed, the wise sage scolded him harshly. "You have done a great wrong. Why have you, a killer of a brahmin, come here? What would you do to us? No! Do not touch me at all! Go! Get out of here! Your being here certainly does not please us. You smell like blood! And you look like a corpse! Your being close to auspicious things is inauspicious. You are dead, though you move about as if you were alive. Dead on the inside, totally unclean, thinking only of your evil deed, you are awake, but you sleep; you exist, but you move about in misery.*

"Your life is a waste, king. You live in great torment. You have plunged into evil now, into the vilest of deeds. Seeking great prosperity,° fathers work to get sons by means of asceticism, sacrificial offerings to the Gods, praising the Gods, and being patiently long-suffering. Look how the lineage of your ancestors has gone to hell because of you! All the hopes they had that depended upon you have now been frustrated. Men honor brahmins and get heaven, long life, glory, and happiness; your constant hostility toward them is useless. Because of your evil deed, when you have left this world behind you will fall head downward for many, many years, though not forever.° Being eaten by blue-necked, iron-beaked vultures, you will return from there and go to an evil birth. And if, king, you believe, 'This world does not really exist; how can there be one after it?' the messengers of Yama, the Lord of Death, will remind you of that in Yama's house."

Bhīṣma said:

147.1 Janamejaya then answered the sage. "Sir, you scold one who needs scolding; you blame one who is worthy of blame—me, sir. You curse me who should be cursed, so I am pleased with you. I really did do all of this myself, and now I burn as if I had been put in a fire. My heart feels no joy in connection with my deeds. Now I have this horrible fear of Yama Vaivasvata. How can I live without getting this sliver out? Śaunaka, you speak to me and dispel all my troubles. A kitchen for the brahmins before,° I will be important for them again.

"This family must not disappear; some remnant of it must persist; but if we are cursed by the brahmins, if we cannot have any formulas of the Vedas, nor any of the usage based on the careful exegesis of the Vedas, there probably will not be any remnant.

"I'm extremely discouraged. And furthermore, I'll tell you what is urgent now. Those who don't have access to Merit-bringing, Lawful actions, who are deprived of the text's prayers, stay that way longer,† they stay on this side,* like Pulindas and Śabaras;† those who may not perform the rites of sacrificial worship never ever gain the other world. Śaunaka—brahmin who are so very learned and wise, while I am so naive—pronounce your wise advice to me, who am not very bright, as a father would for his son.

Śaunaka said:

What is the mystery here? One who is a sage is not troubled by things of the past, since he understands that "for the most part the wise man should do only what is relevant to the present." Having climbed up the lofty tower of wisdom, he feels sorrow for people, while no one need feel any sorrow for him. Like a man standing atop a mountain, he surveys those on the earth below with wise understanding. One who has despaired, or absented himself,° or who is accursed among all virtuous people does not get to that place,‡ does not see the remedies that can be applied.

"Having realized that there is both efficacy and magnanimity in the tradition of the Vedas, perform a great rite of pacification. The brahmins must be your refuge. Doing this will be pertinent to your life beyond this one, and agreeable to the brahmins, who will no longer be angry with you. That is, if you grieve because of your evil deeds; if you have Law in view.

Janamejaya said:

I grieve because of my evil deed, and I do nothing that violates any Law. I seek for someone who will work for my welfare and have affection for me.

Śaunaka said:

As you have eliminated your arrogance and your pride, I want to have affection for you, king. Commit yourself to the welfare of all beings and stay mindful of Law. I summon you§ not because of fear, nor from weakness, nor from greed. The Gods, and the brahmins with them, must hear my truthful words. Seeking nothing from anyone, I summon you to a Lawful rite, even as all beings cry out and say, "Oh, no! Curses." Those ignorant of Law will revile me; men disposed to be unfriendly will revile me; but if I hear such words from a friend, they will trouble me deeply. Some very wise men will recognize that this is a remedy.° Son, Bhārata, understand that what I have done is for the brahmins. And for my sake, do this in such a way that they will find peace. Promise you will do nothing injurious to brahmins, O overlord of men.

Janamejaya said:

Brahmin, I will never do harm to brahmins in word, in thought, and even less in deed. I would touch your feet now.

Śaunaka said:

148.1 So then I will declare what is Law for you, who have repented. For you who are possessed of Royal Splendor and mighty are content to pay heed

* Text note: see endnote at 146.11.
† Text note: see endnote at 147.7.

* They do not go above to "that world," the higher world of heaven, upon death.
† = barbarous tribespeople. ‡ = the lofty vantage point.
§ To the performance of a brahminic rite.

to Law. Having formerly been violent, you have done something very remarkable! Your subjects will imitate that in their own behavior, prince. Everybody will decide, "Truly, there is both good and bad in everything." Where you were that way before, now you heed Law. Your giving up your splendid repasts and your luxuries, and your taking up ascetic observances—this is amazing to your subjects, Janamejaya. That a man with no strength would give something away, or that a miserable man would become an ascetic—there is nothing remarkable in that, they say,

5 for each one of them nearly lives that way as it is. Really, this* is mere wretchedness when it has not been subjected to prior consideration. Therefore it should be done only with prior consideration; only then will there be any virtue in it.

Sacrificial worship, generous gifts, kindness, the Vedas, and truthfulness, O lord of the earth, are the five purifiers. A sixth one is asceticism that is done well. Janamejaya, that is the very best purifier for kings. You will get the most excellent Merit with that, if you adhere to it perfectly.

Visiting holy places is taught in tradition to be the very best purifier. In addition they recite these verses that were sung by Yayāti:†

"A mortal might regain his vital energy, or even live again, simply by performing sacrificial worship. Then, after renouncing, he should perform asceticism."

10 They say Kuru's Field° is a holy place, as is Pṛthūdaka° on the river Sarasvatī, where, if one plunges in, or sips some water, he will not worry about his imminent death. After going to Mahāsaras,° the Puṣkaras, Prabhāsa, and lake Mānasa in the north, you will again go into "The Waters of Time," having regained the vital energy for life.° You shall move along, keeping close to the Sarasvatī and the Dṛṣadvatī.° You shall bathe in all of these places, regularly doing your recitations of the Veda.

He‡ said renunciation, which is characterized by giving something up, is the highest of purifiers.

On this they recite these verses that were composed by Satyavat:

"Like a child,° the Real§ does neither good nor evil.

"Not all beings in this world° know misery; how could they all know

15 happiness? When those who are in their natural state are giving up

* Janamejaya's embrace of "sackcloth and ashes."
† See Yayāti in the LCP.
‡ Probably Manu; see stanza 26 below.
§ Evidently some idea of a transcendent soul is intended, which possibly was thought here to be substantively the same as a universal transcendent principle.

their lives, are headed into the commingling of all things, for the most part their good and bad deeds are manifest for all to see."

I will now tell you the very best of the remedies for a king. Conquer paradise with your army and purify it by sharing it out. He who has military power and energy is the man who is the lord of Lawful Deeds. Go round this earth in order to make the brahmins happy. Since you insulted them previously, placate them now, even though you are being cursed by many of them, and forsaken by many of them. Learned one, your own view should be, "I will not strike back." Do not be angry. Busying yourself with the things you must do yourself, do what is the very highest good.

20 One king is as intense as ice or fire, while another is like a plow or lightning.

Do not think you will have no descendants,° or that you are beyond repair. And never attach yourself to those that are wicked, thinking, "I am done for anyway."

When one feels regret because of his wicked deed, he gets free of a quarter of its evil. When he resolves, "This must not be done again," he gets free of a second quarter. When he resolves, "I shall do only what is Lawful," he gets free of a third quarter.°

The man who wants to do well should think only auspicious thoughts. Those who stay around good fragrances come to smell good themselves. Those who stay around foul odors come to smell bad themselves.

One who dedicates himself to doing asceticism gets completely free of his evil that day.° One who has been accused gets free when he has worshiped the fire for one year. He who has killed a fetus* gets free when he has

25 worshiped the fire for three years. However many living beings a fetus-killer has slain,° when he has saved as many of that kind when they are perishing naturally, he gets free.

Moreover, Manu said° that if he plunges into the water reciting the sin-destroying Aghamarṣaṇa hymn† three times, that is as good as taking the bath that concludes the Horse Sacrifice. He drives his evil off immediately that way and receives kind treatment from people; his subjects become placid towards him as if they were dimwitted and mute..

‡ The Gods and the Asuras all came together once, king, and questioned Bṛhaspati, the teacher of the Gods. "Great seer, you know what fruit there is in Lawful Deeds, and likewise that when one does the opposite, one goes to hell, the realm of the wicked. But when someone has done much of both, which of

* = *bhrūṇahan;* this word is also used for "brahmin-killer," which, of course, applies to Janamejaya here.
† = *RV* 10.190. ‡ Three Vedic-style *triṣṭubhs*.

the two would be victorious over the other in him? Great seer,
tell us about the consequences of doing deeds. How does a
person who habitually does good drive off evil?"

Bṛhaspati said:

30 If one who habitually does good committed an evil deed that
was not deliberate and subsequently performed pious deeds
with full deliberation, he would drive off that earlier evil deed,
just as one may clean a soiled garment by using soap.

A man who has done something evil should not think, "Now I am done for." He should try to perform some auspicious rite with enthusiastic munificence that is free of resentment.* As one may patch the holes in a garment with good cloth, so he who has done evil may get back to auspicious wholesomeness. He who performs an auspicious rite drives off all his evil the way the sun drives off all darkness when it rises once again.

Bhīṣma said:

After Indrota Śaunaka had said this to King Janamejaya, he had the king worship with the Horse Sacrifice in accordance with the prescriptions.

35 † After this the king, his sin removed from him, joined with
Royal Splendor that shone like a blazing fire, entered his
kingdom, coming down hard on his enemies, like the full
moon going into the sky.

(85) *Law in Times of Distress (Continued)*

Bhīṣma said:

149.1 Listen, son of Pṛthā, to this ancient account of a conversation between a vulture and a jackal° just as it happened when it took place long ago in the city of Vidiśā.

There were some people suffering miserably—stricken with grief and wailing, they had picked up their child who had died before becoming a youth, a child who was all the wealth that family had. Having picked up the dead child, they headed for the cremation ground. Then, sitting on the ground there, they passed the body from lap to lap and they wailed.

At the sounds of their wailing a vulture approached and said, "Abandon

* = unstinting generosity for the priests.
† One classical vaṃśastha jagatī.

him, who is just one person in the world, and get out of here immediately.
5 Thousands of men and thousands of women have been brought to this place by Time. Were they without relatives?

"Look how the whole world is governed by pleasures and miseries. Union and separation occur in alternation. Those people who take up the body of a loved one and go, and others who follow after them when they have died, they all last for just their own term of life. You have stayed long enough on this grotesque cremation ground, filled with skeletons and thronged with vultures and jackals, terrifying to all living beings! No one who has succumbed to the one whose mark is Time* has ever come back to life, neither a dear one nor an enemy—this is the way all living beings go.
10 Does not everyone born in the world of mortals die? Who is going to bring a dead man back to life when he is on the path controlled by the Finisher? With people now set upon the end of their work, with the sun having set,† you must let go of your affection for the child and go each to his own place."

After they heard the vulture's speech, king, the boy's family, lamenting, left him there on the ground and turned back. They had no hope he would live again, and, having decided that, they arose and got on the path, leaving their offspring behind. A jackal the same color as a raincloud or a crow came out of its den and said to them as they went along, "Humans
15 sure don't have any feelings! The sun is still up, you fools! Show your affection! Do not be afraid! An hour can see many different things. Sometimes the body is still alive. Lacking all affection for the boy, you dumped him on the ground! How can you depart without any feelings, leaving your son behind on the burning ground? You have no affection for your baby son who talked so cutely, who only had to talk to you to please you. People such as you do not see the affection animals and birds have for their offspring, and they get no reward for supporting their young!‡ These creatures—animals, birds, insects—act simply out of affection, and they are already on course for higher worlds—it is just as it is with the sages'
20 rites of sacrificial worship. We see no advantage in this world or the next for those creatures when they are delighted with their young, yet they keep their offspring. Are they not troubled when they fail to see their dear children? And when they are grown up, the children do not take care of their mother and father at all! Do humans really have affection? They would suffer grief, if they did have it. How can you go away, leaving this boy who will continue your family? Let your tears flow for a long time! Gaze upon him lovingly for a long time! It is especially difficult to let go of such cherished things.

* = Death.
† The vulture lies to hurry them along.
‡ On the other hand, humans reap good benefits in this life and the next by nurturing their young.

"'One's relatives stay but others don't when one is broke, or when one has been charged in court, or when one is headed for the burning ground.

25 "'Life is dear to everyone, and everyone finds affection. Look at the sort of affection there is even in those born as animals.'

"How can you go and leave this one with his rolling eyes big like lotuses, who has been prettied with a bath and garlands as if he were ready for a new bride?"

Bhīṣma said:

After hearing the words of that jackal plaintively chiding them, those people all turned back for the sake of the dead body.

The vulture said:

Oh damn! Are you people turning back because you have lost your fortitude at what this vile, stupid, vicious jackal has told you? Why do you grieve for something that is empty, that has been abandoned to the five elements? That has become like a piece of wood and is inert? Why do you not grieve for your own selves?

30 Perform some severe ascetic observance and free yourselves from sin. You can get anything through asceticism: what's crying going to do for you?

Understand the unpleasant fate that accompanies those with bodies, on account of which everyone in the world goes away, causing endless sorrow.

Wealth, and cattle, and gold, jewels and gems, and sons all have their root in ascetically enduring suffering;° one gets all of them through the practice of asceticism.

Particular sets of pleasures and pains occur for beings exactly as those beings have fashioned them;* a being grabs hold of his pleasures and pains and is born.

The son is not born with the karma of his father, nor is the father born with the karma of his son. They leave by yet another path,° relinquishing their good and evil deeds.†

35 Perform your Lawful Duty with diligence and so avoid violations of Law. Act toward the Gods and the brahmins in accordance with the right times.

Abandon grief and sadness, turn away from affection for your son. Leave him in this open space, then turn directly around.

The doer of a deed experiences it later, both the good deed he does and any horrible violation of Law—so what is there in it for his relatives? When family members leave their dear departed one here, they do not linger. They let go of their affection and leave as tears fill their eyes.

Everyone, whether he is wise or foolish, or rich or poor, goes under the control of Time, filled with his good and bad deeds.

* Through their past deeds.

† Presumably, sons and fathers exit the world by different paths, their association and connection ended.

40 What will you accomplish by grieving? Why grieve after the dead? Time is the lord of everyone, and he looks at everyone the same way in accordance with his basic character. Death comes to all—young people, babies, old folks, and fetuses. This is how this world is.

The jackal said:

Argh! Overcome with affection for your son, you were just grieving for him intensely. But now this stupid vulture has undermined your affection

45 with his perfectly timed speeches that were disinterested and full of sincerity! So now you go to the tank to bathe, having set aside that affection that is so hard to let go. Argh! The misery is so intense when people cry at being separated from their child after attending to the empty corpse of the dead child. It's just as when cows have lost their calves. Now I understand the grief of humans on the face of this earth! And having seen their piteous affection, even my tears flow.

A person must constantly strive, for exertion succeeds by means of fate.° Fate and human effort—each cooperates with the deeds one has done previously.° One should always be optimistic; how can happiness ever come from despair? Success is attained through effort. How can you leave, you heartless people?

Where will you go once you abandon in the wilderness this person who came from your own flesh, who was half your own body, who would have

50 continued the line of your fathers? On the other hand, after the sun has set and while the twilight lingers, you will either take the boy away* or you will stay here.†

The vulture said:

People! In all the thousand years since I was born I have never seen a dead man or woman, or one who is neither man nor woman, come back to life. Some are born who died in the womb; others die the moment they are born. Young men and others go forth into battle and die. The lots of birds and animals in this world are not permanent. The term of life of mobile and

55 immobile beings alike is fixed at the beginning.

Burning with grief, people always go home—those who have lost their dear wives, those full of grief over a son. Leaving behind hundreds of those who were loved, and thousands who were unloved, family members have gone from here in agonizing misery. You must abandon this one—he is cold, he is empty, he is as hard as a block of wood. He is installed in another body, you have been waiting upon a cadaverous piece of wood.‡ Why don't you stop crying for this one whose soul has wandered off and just leave? This affection is pointless, and pointless is your clinging. He does not see you with his eyes, he does not hear you with his ears, so leave him and go back to your homes right now.

I have spoken to you with kind and reasoned arguments that rely upon

* Take him away alive after a miracle of fate.

† You will stay here watching over your (still) dead son with appropriate devotion.

‡ Text note: see endnote at 149.55.

the norms pertaining to Absolute Freedom. Go, each of you to his own dwelling, right away.

People, I have taught you a harsh lesson, using wisdom and analysis, and offering understanding and insight. Now turn back.

The jackal said:

60 How can what this vulture says get you to abandon this boy, who seems to have a golden hue, who is fully decorated with ornaments, this boy who will offer the rice-balls to the departed ancestors? There is no bar to affection, nor to weeping and lamentation. But surely you will suffer if you abandon this one as dead. We have heard that a brahmin boy was brought back to life when Rāma,* who was always zealous to pursue the truth, had restored Law by slaying the śūdra Śambuka.° Likewise, the king-seer Śveta's boy went to his appointed end: When he had died he was brought back to life the next day because his father regularly performed Lawful Deeds. Similarly, any fully successful ascetic, or any sage, or any God could show compassion to you in your misery while you are wailing right here.

Bhīṣma said:

65 When he had told them this, they who were rent with grief, who were filled with tender affection for their boy, went back, placed his head in their laps, and cried for a long time.

The vulture said:

Though soaked with your tears and pummeled by your handling him, he has been ushered into the long sleep through the working of the King of Law.† Even a man who has been thoroughly engaged in asceticism does not avoid being assaulted in Time.

This is the terminus of all affection. This is the city of the dead. Family members stay on this spot miserably for days and nights, ever abandoning children and old folks by the thousands.

Enough with this clinging! Keeping your grief alive is unwarranted. 70 How is he going to live again here today? He is not going to come back to life because of what that jackal says. One that has died and given up his body does not get another body. This boy cannot be made to live again—not through any donation of bodily material, not in many hundreds of years, not even by hundreds of jackals—though, Rudra, or Kumāra, or Brahmā, or Viṣṇu could grant him a wish, and then this kid would live. But he will not live again in this world because of your shedding tears for him, nor because you may cheer up,° nor because of any prolonged lamentation.

I and the jackal and you, the members of this boy's family, are all traveling on that path too, having taken with us our Merit and Demerit 75 from this life.° So the wise man will keep far away from unkindness, harshness, injuring others, the wives of other men, Unlawful deeds, and

* = Rāma Daśaratha of the *Rāmāyaṇa;* see endnote at 149.62.
† = Yama, the Lord of Death.

lying. Diligently pursue truth, Meritorious Deeds, what is auspicious, what is right, and great kindness toward living beings; and non-deviousness and guilelessness.

Those who fail to see their mother and father, their family members, and their friends while they are alive gain the opposite of Merit. But what is all your wailing going to do for him who does not see with his two eyes, who does not move in any way at all at his termination, his finish, his end?

Bhīṣma said:

After he said that, those relatives, suffused with grief, burning up because of their affection for their boy, left him on the ground there and set out for their homes.

The jackal said:

80 Cruel is this world of mortal beings! In it every living thing perishes, and in it we are separated from our dear kin. And life in it is short. Once you've seen all the pretension and lying, all the contention and nasty talk, then existing in it again would simply increase the misery and the grief. The world of men would not suit me even for a little while.

Hot damn! You men are ablaze with grief for your son, yet you give up and turn back at something a vulture tells you, as if you had no sense! If you have any feelings for your son, how can you toss them away and leave just by hearing what this vile, wicked vulture says?

Misery is right next to happiness; happiness is right next to misery.° In this world that is pervaded by pleasure and pain there is not a single thing 85 that is without end. Where will you fools go after you've set this handsome boy on the ground, after you've abandoned your son as too rich a source of grief for his family?

In my mind I see this boy alive, his beauty and his youth fully perfected, as if radiating Splendor, no doubt of it. His demise was undeserved; you will gain happiness, people. And even if he has died, everything will be fine now for you people, who have been burned with the fires of grief for a child. But where are you going to go now, once you've paid your respects to suffering and made sure of your own happiness? Once you've completely forsaken him as if you were stupid?

Bhīṣma said:

90 So the boy's family members stayed there. That jackal used words of nectar to make those people uncertain for the sake of his own ends. All the while that denizen of the burning ground was just playing for nightfall; he was in conflict with Law, and what he had in mind was just the opposite of kindness.

The vulture said:

This part of the grove is cruel: Pierced with the screeches of owls, it teems with the spirits of the dead and is inhabited by Yakṣas and Rākṣasas. It is terrifying and horrifying. It is like the dark blue sky of an approaching storm. Leave this corpse and set your mind on the rites for the departed soul. As long as the sun does not set, as long as the sky is clear, for that

long put your mind on the rites for the departed soul, having left him behind.

Hawks are screeching harshly, cruel jackals cry out, lions roar back and forth, and the sun is setting. Trees are taking on the hue of the black smoke of the funeral pyres, and hungry creatures roar back and forth in the burning ground. All these extremely vicious creatures are terrifically aggressive in this place. Deformed and feasting upon flesh, they will come at you. There will be danger here; you must leave this part of the woods far behind. The boy has become just a block of wood and must be left. You just have to put up with the jackal's harangue. If you lose your concentration and listen to the jackal's pointless and lying words, then you will all perish.

The jackal said:

Stay! There is nothing to fear here! As long as the sun is still shining, carry on here optimistically out of affection for your son. Let yourselves go and cry as much as you like. Gaze upon the boy affectionately as much as you like. Stay here as long as the sun lasts. Of what use to you are the sayings of that carrion-eater? If your minds are confused and you accept these extreme and wild things the vulture says, your son really will be dead.

Bhīṣma said:

The jackal thought,° "The vulture talks as long as the sun has not set, but when the sun has set . . ."

They both addressed the dead boy's funeral party because they were both hungry. Though both were weary with hunger and thirst, the vulture and the jackal argued on, each skillfully pursuing his own ends, each supporting himself from Learned Traditions. As that pair, jackal and bird, so learned in theories, spoke their words of seeming nectar, those people stood up and started going on their way. Then, overcome with grief and sorrow, they stopped and cried. They were confused by the cleverness of those two, each of whom was skillfully pursuing his own business.

As the boy's family members stood there while these two, so learned in philosophies, debated, Śaṃkara* approached. The "Bearer of the Spear"† then said to the humans, "I am the granter of wishes." Those suffering people bowed down and stayed that way. Then they made this answer to him, "We seek life, for we have been deprived of our one and only son. Please give us life by granting life to our son." After they said this the Blessed One, using one handful of water, gave the young man life for a hundred years. Then the Blessed Bearer of the Bow Pināka, who is devoted to the welfare of all beings, gave the jackal and the vulture the gift that their hunger was dissolved. Then, having bowed to the God, thrilling with joy at this great good, everyone stood up and set out happily, having accomplished what they wanted to do.

Through persistent optimism, unwavering conviction, and by the grace of the God of Gods, a benefit is quickly obtained. Look how God's intervention and the conviction of the boy's family members washed away the tears of those wretched mourners. Look how those suffering people became happy in a short time, when, after searching for the right conclusion, they were favored by Śaṃkara. O most excellent of the Bharatas, these people were amazed after their son came back to life, and they were delighted by the favor shown them by Śaṃkara. Then, king, having heard that grief arises from impurity, they took their son and hurried back into the city, overjoyed.

This notion for all beings° has been demonstrated for the four Orders of society. Any man who hears this auspicious history that bears upon Law, Success, and Absolute Freedom stays always in good cheer in this world and after death as well.

* = Śiva. † = Śiva.

(85c) *The Conversation of the Wind and the* Śalmali *Tree (and Nārada)*

150–51 (154–57; 5804–76)

150 (154–55; 5804–39). The seer Nārada approached a gigantic and majestic śalmali *tree in the Himālayas. The seer praised the tree's majesty and generosity toward various creatures that sheltered in and under it (1–5). Nārada noted that the tree had never been damaged by the wind, and he asked the tree what special relationship he had to the Wind God, that mighty Wind should have favored him so (10–20). The* śalmali *tree informed the seer that Wind has done him no favors. He was stronger than Wind and did not fear Wind (20–25). Nārada scorned the* śalmali *for his foolish talk and promised to repeat his boasts to Wind (25–35).*

151 (156–57; 5841–76). Nārada tattled on the śalmali *to Wind and then praised Wind's might (1–5). Wind then went to the* śalmali *and scolded him. The* śalmali *had been sheltered from Wind out of respect for the fact that the Grandfather created him last. Wind would now demonstrate to the tree that he, Wind, was more than just one of the elements of nature (5). The tree answered the wind with taunts, and Wind promised his demonstration for the morrow. Truly frightened, the tree shed his limbs, leaves, and flowers. When Wind came roaring up the next day and saw the tree,*

he grinned and told the tree that, though he had done this to himself, he, the Wind had been the ultimate cause. The tree burned with shame (10–25). Bhīṣma then admonishes Yudhiṣṭhira that it is sometimes necessary to put up with someone mightier than oneself (25–30).

Bhīṣma says that now the Laws for kings and the Laws for times of distress have been declared (30).

Bhīṣma said:

150.1 On this they recite this ancient account of a conversation between a *śalmali* tree* and the Wind, O best of the Bharatas.

There was a great tree in the Snowy Mountains that was many years old and still had its trunk, its branches, and its foliage. Rutting elephants would rest beneath it when plagued by the heat and worn down by exertion, and so would other kinds of animals. This tree had blossoms and fruit, and it measured a *nalva*† in circumference; its shade was thick, and it 5 was filled with the noise of parrots and myna birds. Merchants in caravans and forest-dwelling ascetics and travelers would stay a while under this very charming and most excellent of trees.

O bull of the Bharatas, when Nārada approached it and saw all its extensive branches and boughs, he said to it, "Oh how charming and beautiful you are! O *śalmali*, O best of trees, you please us always. Dear, birds are always delighted to stay in your very lovely branches, and animals and elephants are delighted to stay below them. When I look at your branches and boughs and your massive trunk, I see that none of 10 them at all have been broken by the Wind. Is Wind your cherished friend, my dear? Since surely he always protects you in this forest? Wind is powerful, and when he blows he uproots trees high and low and displaces the peaks of mountains. When Wind blows fragrant and clean he dries up even the Pātāla hell below the earth, and lakes and rivers and oceans. There can be no doubt, Wind must protect you because of friendship. So you have an abundance of branches and all your leaves and flowers.

"It seems very charming to you, tree, that these birds are in good cheer 15 and take their pleasure upon you. As they all sing so fetchingly in the season so favorable to flowers, I hear the sweet notes of each one of them, and of all of them together. And these jolly elephants displaying the splendid beauty of their particular herds and clans have taken to you because they were plagued by the heat, and they find comfort with you, *śalmali*. And with these other kinds of animals, and the caravans paused here, you shine splendidly, tree. You shine like Mount Meru! And you

* The very large *Salmalia malabarica* Schott et Endl.; see endnote at 150.1.
† = about six hundred feet; see endnote at 150.1 and the glossary.

shine like Mount Meru because of the brahmins fully perfected through asceticism who are here. And because of the non-brahmin ascetics here too. I think this place of yours here is the equal of heaven.

"Whether it is because he is a relative or because of friendship, O *śalmali*, there is no doubt that the terrifying Wind that sweeps everywhere 20 watches over you all the time. O *śalmali*, since Wind protects you, you must have stooped to the most extreme abasement before him. You must have said to him, 'I am yours.' I do not see the tree, nor the mountain firm that has not been broken by the force of Wind. I don't think there is one on earth. But on the other hand, you and your following, *śalmali*, are always protected by Wind for some reason. So you stand free of risk."

The śalmali *said:*

Wind is not my friend, brahmin, nor is he a relative, nor an ally. Nor is it that Wind is my supreme lord and thus protects me. My energy is more powerful and terrible than Wind's, Nārada. With all his breath, Wind does 25 not attain even an eighteenth portion of my force. When the worst Wind comes, smashing trees and mountains and whatever else there is, I stiffen against him mightily. That smasher tempest has been broken by me many times as he blew, smashing away. So, seer among the Gods, I do not fear Wind even when he is angry.

Nārada said:

O *śalmali*, your way of seeing it is just the opposite of mine, that's for sure. There is nowhere a being whose might is equal to the might of Wind. Indra, Yama, Vaiśravaṇa,* and Varuṇa, the Lord of Waters—not even these Gods are equal to Wind. So how could you be, tree? When any being with the breath of life in him moves upon this earth, in every instance it is 30 the Blessed Lord Wind who causes that breath and that movement. When perfectly controlled, this one causes all the movement of living, breathing beings.° On the other hand, when it is not properly controlled, it moves within men bizarrely.

You do not respect Wind, who really is like this, who is the best of the supporters of all beings, and who is worthy of honor. What is that except lightness of mind? You have no hard inner substance, you stupid thing, you just talk a lot. O *śalmali*, you speak vainly, cloaked in anger and such. I have become angry at you while you've been talking like this. I myself am 35 going to tell Wind the many bad things you've said. Stupid tree, Wind is not despised in this way by sandalwood trees, *spandana* trees, *śāla* trees, pine trees, deodar trees, cane reeds, nor by tethering ropes, all of which are even stronger and more accomplished than you. These know the strength of Wind and of themselves. Therefore, these best of trees will bend to Wind's blowing. But you, from your delusion, do not know Wind's boundless power.

* = Kubera.

Bhīṣma said:

151.1 After that best of those who know the *brahman* had spoken to the *śalmali* tree, Nārada told Wind all that the *śalmali* had said. "Some *śalmali* tree growing on the heights of the Snowy Mountains, a tree with a great trunk and many branches and surrounded by a retinue, is contemptuous of you, Wind. He uttered many insults at you, which it would not be right for me to repeat before you, Lord Wind. Wind, I know you are the best supporter of all living beings—the very best and the most important—and I know you are like Vaivasvata* in anger."

5 After he heard what Nārada said, Wind went to the *śalmali* tree and spoke to him angrily. "O *śalmali* tree, the things you said before Nārada expressed contempt for me. I, Wind, will now demonstrate my power and majesty to you. I am aware of who you are. You are known to me, tree. The Lord Grandfather reached the end of his creation of beings with you. And just because he stopped with you, you have been accorded special favor. You have been protected because of that, you most stupid and lowest of trees, not because of any power of your own. Since you despise me as just another element of nature, I am going to show myself to you so you will realize who I am."

10 Smiling a bit, the *śalmali* tree replied, "Wind, in your anger, go show your self to yourself out in the woods. Let go of your anger toward me. What are you going to do to me in your fury? I would not be afraid of you, Wind, even if you were the Supreme Lord himself."°

Wind then said, "Tomorrow I will display my energy to you."

Night then approached. The *śalmali* tree then reflected upon things Wind had brought about and he saw that he was not equal to Wind. "What I said to Nārada about Wind was wrong. I am no match for Wind

15 in strength; he is stronger. Wind is always mighty, as Nārada said he was. In fact I am even weaker than the other trees, no doubt of that. However, no other tree is equal to me in wits, so I will rely upon my wits and escape Wind's threat. If the trees of the forest would resort to this stroke of wit they would always be safe from angry Wind, no doubt about it. Those fools do not know how Wind enraged might not blow against them, as I do."

After these reflections, the *śalmali* tree began shaking. He knocked

20 branches, limbs, and boughs off of himself. He saw Wind coming at dawn, after he had shed those branches and his leaves and flowers. Knocking down large trees, the angry blowing Wind came to the place where the *śalmali* tree stood.

† Wind looked at him who had no leaves, whose outer branches had fallen off, whose flowers were all gone. Smiling at him, he said to the silly *śalmali* tree with its broken limbs:

* = Yama, the lord of death.
† One proto-classical, upajāti triṣṭubh.

"O *śalmali* tree, this whole shedding of branches you have done to yourself was something I, out of anger, made you do this way. You have no flowers or outer branches, your shoots and foliage are all gone—in your own ill-conceived plan you have been in the thrall of my power."

25 When he heard Wind's statement the *śalmali* was ashamed, and he burned as he recalled what Nārada had said to him. So, tiger among kings, he who engages in hostilities with someone stronger when he is weak is a fool who suffers as the *śalmali* tree did. So a weak man should not act with hostility toward those that are stronger, for, acting in a hostile way, he will be sorry, as the *śalmali* tree was. Exalted beings do not manifest hostility toward those that offend them, great king, they demonstrate their might softly and quietly.

A stupid man should not behave in a hostile way toward one who lives by virtue of his intelligence. The intelligence of an intelligent man moves

30 the way a fire runs through grass. King, there is nothing in men equal to intelligence; thus one might make someone think,° "Nothing exists that is the equal of power."

So, king, one must put up with fools, and those who are deaf or dumb, and those who may be stronger than oneself. This has been seen in you, O slayer of your enemies. O man of great brilliance, the eleven and the seven army divisions* were not equal in might to the exalted Arjuna. They† were assaulted and shattered by that glorious son of Pāṇḍu, that offspring of the God who had punished the Daitya Pāka with death,‡ who relied upon his might in battle.

The Laws of the king and the Laws for times of distress have been declared to you at length, Bhārata. What more shall I tell you?

(85) Law in Times of Distress (Continued)

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

152.1 O bull of the Bharatas, I want to know what really is the base that evil deeds stand upon, and where evil deeds come from.

Bhīṣma said:

Overlord of men, learn what is the base that evil deeds stand upon. Greed alone is the great monster. Evil comes from greed. From it come evil, violation of Law, and unsurpassable misery; it is the root of their wickedness when men do evil. Anger comes from greed, lust comes from greed, delusion and illusion come from greed, and pride and arrogance and

* = the eleven Kaurava and seven Pāṇḍava armies that fought in the great Bhārata war.
† = the eleven Kaurava armies.
‡ Arjuna's father was Indra, the slayer of the demon Pāka.

5 ennui;° impatience, shamelessness, the disappearance of one's luster, the dwindling away of one's accumulated Merit, anxiety, and imprudence—all of it comes from greed.

And too, lack of principle and lack of forethought. Also the deeds of the wicked. And expertise at cheating, and intoxication with one's beauty or power. And distrust toward everyone, crookedness toward everyone, aggressiveness toward everyone, inappropriateness toward everyone, stealing the property of others, and touching another man's wife.

Also, violent impulses of speech, mental seizures, and violent outbursts of castigation, violent eruptions in one's groin or one's belly, and the dreadful spasm of death; the powerful impulse of envy, the hard-to-resist impulse to lie, violent eruptions of excretions that are difficult to hold back, 10 and sudden eruptions in the ears that are hard to endure—contempt, boasting, malicious jealousy—causing others to do what is wrong and the doing of all those things that are violent and wrong.

At birth, in babyhood, in childhood, and in adolescence a man never gets rid of the deeds he himself has done, and these do not decay as he decays.

The greedy desire that cannot be fulfilled through acquisition—as the ocean is never filled by all the deep-water rivers—O uplifter of the Kurus; the greedy desire that is not thrilled by acquisitions, that is not satisfied with trysts of love, that is not really experienced by the Gods, nor the Gandharvas, nor the Asuras, nor the great serpents, nor by any of the other kinds of beings—that greedy desire, along with delusion, must be conquered by a man who has conquered himself.

Deceit, aggression, criticizing others, slander, selfishness—all these are found in those greedy ones who spirits are only crudely formed.

15 There are men of great learning who hold in their memory very large texts of Learned Teachings, men who can cut through matters of doubt, but they have little understanding and are afflicted in this world. Addicted to hatred and anger, acting outside the behavior of men properly educated,° sweet-talkers but sharp-edged on the inside, they are like pits covered over with grass. These vile snatchers of Merit° fly the flag of Law° while they rob the world. Relying upon the force of logical arguments, they create many pathways this way and that, but in fact they destroy every pathway, fixed as they are in ignorance and greedy desire. When Law is taken over by base men consumed by greedy desires, whatever rule of it they deform becomes established in that altered form. And beyond that, pride, anger, lust, laziness, joy, grief, and arrogance are seen in those men with their greedy minds. Realize that they have not been properly educated and are constantly filled with greedy desire.

20 But you should question those that have been properly educated, men who follow pure observances whom I will tell you about. They have no fear regarding their subsistence in this world, nor any fear about the world beyond. They have no undue attachment to any cherished objects, nor to people who favor them nor those that do not. They hold dear the way of life of the properly educated, and self-control is firmly established in them. Happiness and misery are far from their concerns; what is true and real is their highest regard. They are givers and not receivers, and they are compassionate. They hold their ancestors, the Gods, and guests dear, are always exerting themselves strenuously, offering assistance to everyone, wise, carefully keeping all Laws, seeking the welfare of all beings, fit to receive gifts from anyone; having gone to the further shore in the 25 performance of Law, they cannot be upset, Bhārata. Their way of life, which was fashioned in the past by strictly good men, has not been interrupted. Staying on the path of the strictly virtuous, they are not plagued by scruples, nor are they insouciant, nor are they too forbiddingly severe. Only strictly good men ever wait upon them, non-injuriousness is firmly established among them, they are devoid of desire and anger, they have no sense of "mine," nor do they think of "I" first. Careful observers of vows, holding firmly to the laws, it is these you should reverence and question. Law is their motive, Yudhiṣṭhira; they do not act to gain cattle, nor to gain glory. They perform the functions of the body, but only because it is a necessity. They never know fear, nor anger, nor agitation, nor sorrow. They do not hypocritically fly the flag of Law, they resort to nothing that is hidden from others. There is no greedy desire among them, nor any delusion; they are devoted to truth and right. You should feel 30 affection toward them, son of Kuntī; their minds are always alert. They are not excited when they acquire something, they are not upset when they lose anything, they have no sense of "mine," nor do they think of "I" first, they are based upon pure being,* they see everything to be the same.

> † Gain and loss, happiness and misery, son, the favorable and
> the unfavorable, death and life—these are all the same to these
> men who keep a steady pace, whose minds are awakened, who
> have positioned themselves in pure being.‡
>
> Diligent and attentive, you should comfort these men of
> tremendous majesty with favors and kindnesses.
>
> All beings are endowed with attributes through the operation
> of fate, just as prattling on with words may be good or bad.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

153.1 Grandfather, you said greedy desire is the base upon which wicked deeds stand. Now, grandpa, I want to hear the basic truth about ignorance too.

Bhīṣma said:

He who does evil from ignorance does not know what is right for

* = *sattva.*
† Two nondescript, Vedic-style triṣṭubhs.
‡ = *sattva.*

himself; he scorns the ways of the righteous, and people talk about him. From ignorance one goes to hell, and through ignorance one gets a bad passage after death; one gains torment from ignorance, and from it one drowns in catastrophes.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

I want to hear truly and exactly the working of ignorance, its remaining constant, its growth, and its rise and demise; its root, its work, its course,
5 its seasons, its basic cause, and the motive cause behind it. And I want to hear truly and accurately how misery here in this world is ascertained to have ignorance as its origin.

Bhīṣma said:

Attraction, aversion, delusion, joy, grief, arrogance, desire, anger, pride, weariness, and laziness; want, aversion, mental torment, suffering at another's prospering—all this is designated as ignorance, as are the things evil men do. Its working in all this,° and its growth and so on, which you ask about, hear about that at length, brawny-armed lord of peoples.

Ignorance and greediness have the same outcomes and the same faults,
10 Bhārata. Understand them to be one and the same. Ignorance has greedy desire as its origin. And it grows greater when the other has grown; stays steady when the other is steady, wastes away when the other wastes away, and it comes to have a variegated course.

The root of vast greed is the movement of the soul in Time. When greed has been chopped and cut every which way, its basic cause is Time alone.

From one's ignorance comes greed, and from greed comes ignorance. Similarly, all faults come from greed, so one should avoid greed.

Janaka, Yuvanāśva, Vṛṣādarbhi, and Prasenajit all got to heaven by destroying greedy desire, and so did other kings. So obviously, O best of the Kurus, you yourself must get rid of greedy desire here in this world. Having gotten rid of greedy desire, you will move on to happiness in this world and after you die.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

154.1 O grandfather who are completely given to Law, what is regarded to be best here for a brahmin who seeks Lawful Merit, who makes the effort to recite the Vedas? Since the world can be understood in many ways, tell me, grandfather, what you think is best both for this world and for the next. The path of Law is vast, and it has many branchings, Bhārata. Which one of all the Laws do you think best to carry out in this world? And, king, what is the deepest root of Law that really is vast and really does have many branches. Tell me all that, papa, since you are not too tired.

Bhīṣma said:

5 All right! I will tell you how you may get to what is best. Wise, you will be sated with knowledge, as if you had drunk nectar. More than a few rules of Law have been variously declared by the great seers, each referring to his own particular understanding. Self-control is the ultimate focus of all

of them. The ancients who have discerned the right conclusions say self-control is the most excellent virtue. Especially for a brahmin, self-control is the everlasting Law. The rites of one who is not self-controlled are never observed to succeed the way they should. Self-control and making gifts surpass sacrifices and Vedic recitations. Self-control increases one's luster, and it is the best purifier. A soul that is free of evil and joined with fiery
10 energy finds the Universal. We hear of no other Law in any realm that is like self-control. Self-control is recommended as the supreme observance in the world for those who follow the entire Law. O lord of men, one joined with self-control finds supreme happiness after dying and enjoys vast Merit. The self-controlled man sleeps happily, and happily he awakes: he perceives people cheerfully, and his mind is clear. The man who is not self-controlled constantly ends up in torment and discharges many other evils produced from his own mistakes. They say self-control is the supreme pious practice in all the four religious Patterns of Life.

I will declare to you those attributes the convergence of which is self-
15 control. Patience, fidelity, non-injuriousness, acting the same toward all, truthfulness, rectitude, conquering the senses, industriousness, gentleness, modesty, steadiness, generosity, unexcitability, contentment, speaking only favorable things, non-acquisitiveness, non-resentfulness—the convergence of these is self-control. Honoring one's parents, compassion toward beings, not running others down, and avoiding gossip, idle talk, and praising and blaming others.°

Lust, anger, greed, pride, stubbornness, boasting, delusion, envy, contempt of others—a self-controlled man engages in none of these.

The man who is blameless, completely free of lust, wants only a little, and is not resentful—like the ocean, he is never filled up.°

20 "I am yours and you are mine; these are mine and I am theirs"—the self-controlled man does not say these things with reference to his former relatives.

It* is all the pious procedures there are in the world, both of the village and the wilderness.

He who resorts neither to blaming nor to praising is free.

The friendly man who has a perfected character, who is highly dedicated to his companions, and who is freed from all the various kinds of attachments has a great reward when he goes beyond death. He who behaves well, who has a perfected character, who is completely placid, who is wise and is aware of the Self, having attained honor in this world achieves a good passage after death.

Whatever good karma there is in this world, and whatever good karma has been done by the strictly virtuous, all that belongs to him who is engaged in cultivating Knowledge; the Merit of the hermit is never

* = self-control.

25 deficient.° Having departed home and resorted to the forest, the man who is engaged in cultivating Knowledge, who has conquered his senses, who wanders about waiting expectantly for Time—that man is fit to become *brahman.* The man who has no fear of any beings, and of whom no beings have any fear, he has nothing to fear when he separates from his body. He who expends his prior karmas and does not accumulate any more, he who is the same toward all beings, who moves along the way of friendliness, certainly he leaves no trail behind him, just as the passage of birds in the sky or of fish in the water leaves no visible trail. O king, celestial worlds made up of brilliant, fiery energy for everlasting years befit the man who 30 has left his home and devoted himself to Absolute Freedom. Having renounced all doing of deeds, having renounced ascetic practices carried out in accordance with the prescriptions, having renounced all the different special techniques,° having renounced everything, he who does not turn back to his lusts and pleasures, who becomes completely placid within, who is aware of his Self and is pure—having gained honor in this world, he achieves heaven.

The level of the Grandfather,* which is always concealed in secret, which arises out of the mass of *brahman*—one arrives at it by means of self-control.

He who is awakened and delights in Knowledge, who has no hostility toward any beings, does not run the danger of returning to this world again—what fear would he have in the next world?

There is only one fault with self-control and no other: That people think 35 the self-controlled man to be weak when he is in fact being tolerant. But, O you of great wisdom, there is a great advantage to this fault: For the man who suffers in patience, it is easy to get to vast celestial worlds.

What need does a self-controlled man have of the wilderness, Bhārata? Likewise, what good is it for him who is not self-controlled? Wherever the self-controlled man lives, that is his wilderness, that is his retreat.

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

After he had heard this speech of Bhīṣma's, King Yudhiṣṭhira felt as if he had been refreshed with nectar, and he became completely joyous. He then questioned Bhīṣma, the best of those who support Law, again, and that one told him everything about asceticism, O scion of the Kurus.†

Bhīṣma said:

155.1 The seers say that everything here has the heat of asceticism for its foundation, for the fool who has not performed ascetic heating does not gain the fruit of his rituals. The Lord Progenitor created all that is here through ascetic heat. Likewise the seers discovered the Vedas through asceticism. Those fully realized ones who eat only roots and fruits and the

* = Brahmā.
† = Janamejaya.

wind in the due course of their ascetic observances are able to see, when they are completely concentrated in meditation, all the three worlds through the power of their ascetic heat. Plants such as medicines and the like, and the three perfected bodies of learning,* are all made effective through the heat of ascetic observance. Really, all efficacy has ascetic heat 5 for its basis.† Everything can be accomplished through the power of ascetically endured suffering—what is hard to acquire, what is hard to recite, what is hard to assail, what is hard to endure—for nothing can get past asceticism.

A man can be released from sin through asceticism that is rigorously observed—he who drinks spirits, he who takes something without permission, he who kills a fetus,‡ and one who violates his teacher's bed.

Of asceticism with its many forms there is no higher ascetic practice than not eating, whether for the man who is active in the world in this or that way, or for the man who lives a life of withdrawal. Non-injuriousness, speaking the truth, making gifts, restraining the senses—even the ascetic suffering involved in these observances is not higher than not eating.

There is nothing more difficult to do° than to give; there is no religious Pattern of Life that surpasses one's mother; there is nothing higher than the three Vedas; renunciation is the highest asceticism.

10 One's senses stand watch to protect one's wealth and one's grain; therefore, with regard to Gain and Merit, there is no ascetic suffering higher than not eating.

Seers, ancestors, Gods, humans, the highest of animals, and whatever other beings there are, mobile and immobile, are all committed to ascetic suffering and become successful through their asceticism. So it was that the Gods acquired their greatness. The choice lots in the world are rewards that always come through ascetic suffering. Through the power of asceticism even divinity can be gained, that's a certainty.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

156.1 In regard to the observance of Law, the brahmin seers, the ancestors, and the Gods all praise that which is "the Real." I want to hear about "the Real"; tell me about it, grandfather. What are the characteristics of "the Real," king? And how does one arrive at it? What would one be, having arrived at the Real? How is it declared?

Bhīṣma said:

The mixing of the Laws of the four social Orders is disapproved.° The Real is that which has been least transformed in all the Orders, Bhārata.

The Real is always Law for the strictly virtuous; the Real is the everlasting Law. It is the Real that is worshiped; the Real lies at the end

* The first three Vedas, *Ṛg Veda, Sāma Veda,* and *Yajur Veda.*
† Text note: see endnote at 155.4d.
‡ This word also refers to one who kills a brahmin.

5 of the supreme course after death. The Real is Law, asceticism, and yoga meditation. The Real is the everlasting *brahman.* The Real has been said to be the highest form of ritual sacrificial worship. Everything is established upon the Real. I will declare to you exactly and in due order the Real's forms of behavior, and, accordingly, its description. You ought to learn how the Real is arrived at.

The Real is thirteenfold among all people, Bhārata. The Real itself, being the same toward all, and self-control, no doubt of it, unselfishness, being long-suffering, modesty, patience, not being resentful, renunciation, meditation, nobility, constant firm persistence, and non-injuriousness—lord of kings, these are the thirteen forms of the Real.

10 The Real itself is immutable, permanent, and never altering. It is opposed to no Law, and it is arrived at through yoga meditation.°

"Being the same toward all" is sameness toward oneself and one's enemy, toward what is liked and what is disliked; having reached a fading away of preference and aversion, and a fading away of love and anger.

"Self-control" is never trying to rival others, steadfastness, composure, fearlessness, and the dampening of anger—it is arrived at through Knowledge.

The wise say "unselfishness" is giving gifts and restricting oneself to doing only Deeds of Law. One becomes unselfish by means of regularly attending the Real.

With regard to "being long-suffering" or not being long-suffering, the good man puts up with all niceties and all insults and, possessed of the Real, he gains what is good.

15 A "modest" man does not boast a lot to anyone when he has done something superb. He is always quiet in mind and quiet in speech, while modesty is gained from doing Lawful Deeds.

"Patience" is being tolerant for the sake of Merit or Success, and is also called "being long-suffering." It exists for the sake of the world's preservation, and it is gained by steadfastness.

There is the "renunciation" of affection, and the "renunciation" of the objects of the senses, the "renunciation" of one who has rid himself of attraction and aversion; there is none beyond these.

"Nobility" in beings is when someone does a good deed with great exertion and without any fuss; and it is having all passions gone.

"Persistence" is never deviating, whether in comfort or in pain; the wise 20 man who desires his own welfare always partakes of it. It always comes to be for the man who is patient and dedicated to the Real. The sage who has shed joy, fear, and anger arrives at persistence.

"Non-injury" toward all beings in deed, thought, and word; and kindness and the giving of gifts—these are the everlasting Law of the strictly virtuous.

These thirteen forms are individual characteristics of the one Real—they partake of the Real, and they amplify it, Bhārata. No one can declare any end to the excellent qualities of the Real, Bhārata. So the seers and the ancestors and the Gods all praise the Real. There is no Lawful Deed higher than truthfulness; there is no sin worse than lying. The Real is the 25 persistence of Law, so one should never infringe upon the Real. The giving of gifts proceeds from the Real, as do rites of sacrificial worship endowed with presents for the priests, special religious observances, Agnihotra rites of sacrifice, the Vedas, and all the other obligations of Law. When one thousand Horse Sacrifices and the Real were held on the two sides of a scale, the Real outweighed the thousand Horse Sacrifices.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

157.1 O bull of the Bharatas who have such great wisdom, tell me where anger comes from, and lust, grief, delusion, questioning curiosity,° ennui, pride, greed, selfishness, jealousy, contempt for others, resentment, and pity. Tell me all of this precisely.

Bhīṣma said:

Tradition teaches that these thirteen are extremely powerful enemies of living beings and that all of them together wait in attendance upon men in this life, great king. Ever alert, they urge on the man who is not paying attention; and they rip him apart, the way wolves do, when they see other 5 men coming.* "Misery begins with these. Evil begins with these"; that is how a mortal should ever understand them, O bull of the Bharatas.

Okay! I will recount for you their origination, their remaining constant, and their demise, O highest among men, listen as I tell it.

Anger arises from greed; it is stimulated by the faults of others. It stays at rest when one is patient, and a man of splendid dignity never indulges in it.

Lust is born from the imagination, and when one attends to it, it grows more intense. It departs after one learns the fundamental truth about it from the wise and one sees that it is a vice.

Those who have little intelligence only see learned works as opposed to each other, and then questioning curiosity arises. It goes away when they learn the fundamental truth about the matter.

10 Grief arises from delight, from a person's being separated from that;† when he comes to realize it is useless, then it disappears immediately.

Ennui comes from repeated indulgence in anger and greed. It goes away with kindness toward all beings and radical indifference.

When one abandons other beings, he indulges in selfishness and attends to things that are not conducive to his well-being; that disappears, son, by waiting upon virtuous people.

* They tear apart their kill and run off.
† = that which delights him.

People are proud because of their families, their knowledge, or their power; pride always disappears when these things are fully analyzed.

Jealousy arises out of desire and from rivalry with others; it vanishes with wise insight into other mortals.

15 Contempt for others originates, king, because of the outrageous behavior of people besides one's own, and from the hostile and impolite things they say; it dies out by not paying attention to them.

Profound resentment arises toward a powerful person who does one injury, but against whom one is unable to retaliate; it disappears as a result of compassionate understanding.

Pity° arises from seeing the wretched constantly; when one realizes where doing one's Law terminates, then pity dies down.°

They say these thirteen are conquered on the basis of complete inner quiet.

The sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra had all these thirteen faults. You, always trying with all your heart, conquered them, and you will conquer these as well.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

158.1 I understand kindness by always watching the strictly pious, but I do not understand vicious men or their deeds, Bhārata. Men avoid a man who acts viciously just as they avoid thorns, pits, and fire. A vicious man is ever the lowest of men, both in this world and the next, Bhārata. So tell me, Kaurava, what is the position of Law toward this man.

Bhīṣma said:

His envy is invisible, but his aims are known through his actions: He who scolds others is being scolded within; he who constrains others is himself constrained.

5 His only glory being what has been given to him, the vicious man is unfair, mean-spirited, a low-down cheat, taking no pleasure with anyone else, conceited, subject to various addictions, a braggart, suspicious of everyone, harsh, childish, a whiner, constantly praising his own group, always stirring up hostilities in the hermitage, constantly amusing himself by injuring others, having no special virtues or faults, highly pretentious, very clever, and extremely greedy.

He judges anyone who habitually acts in accordance with Law, or who is endowed with virtues, to be "wicked." By inference from his own character he trusts no one. He broadcasts even the hidden faults of others, but as to the faults he and others have in common, he offends "simply
10 in order to get by." He thinks that anyone who helps another has been deceived, and if he has given any money to anyone who has helped him, he regrets it after a while.

They know as "vicious" the man who will enjoy some hearty food, or some soft food, or food for licking, or any other sort of good thing to consume° while others are watching.

He who eats with his friends, having given the first servings to brahmins, attains heaven after he dies and enjoys boundlessness in this life.

The vicious man has been detailed to you, O best of the Bharatas. A man who wants to do well should always avoid such a man.

Bhīṣma said:

159.1 He who° has already accomplished his ends,°* or one who is about to perform sacrificial rituals, or one who has become an accomplished scholar of all the Vedas, or one who is engaged in service to his teacher, or his ancestors, or who wishes to marry a wife, or one who is dedicated to the daily recitation of the Veda—all these brahmins are seen as virtuous men who are beggars for the sake of Law.° One should give grants to such men when they are propertyless, in accordance with the excellence of their learning.

Presents in consideration of priestly services are to be given to other brahmins, most excellent of the Bharatas. Food that is not uncooked° is ordained for others, away from the altar.

The king should bestow every kind of jewel upon them, according to their deserts.

Brahmins should have food, and the rites of sacrifice should have presents attached to them.

5 He who has a supply of food sufficient to feed his dependents for three years or more ought to drink the Soma.°†

If a worshiper's rite of sacrifice has been wounded by the lack of a single element, especially if it is a brahmin's sacrifice, then, if there be a king devoted to Law, that king can take that substance needed for the sacrificial rite from the household of a vaiśya who has many cattle, but who neither drinks the Soma nor performs any rites; or he may take anything of substance that he wishes from the dwelling of a śūdra, for a śūdra has no property that belongs to him in his dwelling.° Without giving it a second thought he may take it from the household of one who has a hundred cows but has not established the ritual fire, or of one who has a thousand cows
10 but has not offered sacrificial worship. Or, lord, the king may always take it from those who fail to make gifts, making public announcement thereof. Truly, the Merit of the king who behaves in this way shall be intact.

At the time of the seventh meal, he who has not eaten for the duration of six meals should—without making any provision for the next day—take from one who does not perform rites; it is procured from the granary, from the field, from the house, or wherever. He should make this act known to the king, whether the king asks about it or not. The king who knows Law would not Lawfully impose punishment upon him.

* By performing rituals.

† That is, the wealthy should perform the expensive rites that support the priests.

Brahmins are afflicted with hunger because of the thoughtlessness of kṣatriyas. Having ascertained his learning and his conduct, the king should settle a living for a brahmin, and he should protect him as a father protects his own fully legitimate son.

At the turn of every year he may make the "offering to the universal fire."° In the past a Law had no alternatives; everything was settled
15 by the statements of Law alone. But substitutions based on perceptible commonalities were made by the Viśvedevas, the Sādhyas, brahmins, and great seers, in times of emergency when they feared death. But a man of great means who follows the secondary rule of a primary rule is in bad faith° and does not get any benefit from it in the next world.

No man should inform to the king about the brahmins. Upon being informed about them, the king should realize that as powerful as he is, he has no power over them, that they are more powerful than he. So it is the king can never stand the fiery brilliance of those who speak the *brahman*. Advisor, ruler, and creator, a brahmin is said to be a "God." No one should ever say anything inauspicious to a brahmin, nor utter even a sour word.

A kṣatriya crosses over calamity through the power of his own two arms; a vaiśya uses his wealth, and so does a śūdra; a brahmin uses ritual formulas and ritual offerings.

20 Girls, young women, men excluded from hearing the ritual formulas, and simpletons cannot be servers of the Agnihotra sacrifice,° nor can one who has not been blessed by means of the personal rituals.* These people fall into hell if they make those offerings, and so does he for whom the rite is done.

Those who see the Laws say that he who has not given a horse dedicated to the Progenitor as the concluding present to the priest who installs his fires is simply "Someone who has not installed the ritual fires."

Someone who is zealously pious° and has his senses under control may do other holy things, but there is no way he can perform sacrificial worship with rites that make no presents to the priests. The sacrificial rite that is not accompanied by presents for the priests assaults the sacrificer's offspring, his cattle, and his heaven; and it diminishes his senses, his fame, his glory, and his life.

These all have the characteristics of śūdras: He who resides with a woman who is menstruating, he who has no fires, and they whose families
25 do not learn the Veda. The brahmin who has married a śūdra woman and lives for twelve years in a village which gets its water only from a well becomes a śūdra through his deeds.° The brahmin who keeps° a non-Aryan woman for sex while forsaking a twice-born woman he still supports as his wife should regard himself as not really a brahmin; at rituals he should sit upon the strew of grass toward the back. Thus he is purified, king.

* = *saṃskāras*, the "life-cycle" rituals.

Hear what I have to say on this:

> * When a brahmin patronizes the black Order of society† for one night, he does evil. He can still his evil by observing the vows of a student for three years, standing by day and sitting by night as he carries out his normal routines.°
>
> They say these five kinds of lies are not serious sins:° A statement made in jest does him no harm, nor does one to women, nor one at the time of making a marriage, nor one for the sake of one's teacher, nor one to save one's own life.

One who is zealously pious° may take good learning even from a base man; one may take gold from the midst of filth—so says the settled rule;
30 one may take a gem of a woman even from a bad family, and one may sip nectar out of poison; for women, gem-stones, and water are not spoiled with respect to their functions in connection with Meritorious, Lawful Deeds.°

A vaiśya may take up the bow to promote the welfare of cows and brahmins, when there is confusion of the Orders of society, and in order to protect himself.

The drinking of liquor,° brahmin-murder, and violating the bed of one's teacher: These offenses are regarded as ineligible for expiations, up to the end of life°—so says the settled rule.

Theft, taking gold that is the property of brahmins,‡ is a sin that causes one to fall from his position. So is living a dissolute life drinking liquor and having illicit sex.°

Great king, from associating with fallen brahmins, even if by marriage,°
35 one comes to be such a person himself before long. Associating with someone fallen by officiating at his rites, or by teaching him the Vedas, or through marriage, causes one to fall in a year;° but not just by traveling with them, sitting with them, or eating with them. These deeds and others besides do have expiations assigned—so says the settled rule. By means of the measure assigned, he should become free of evil effects in time.

At the funeral offering for one who has not fallen,° the food is not offered sideways into the fire.§ For the three mentioned first°‖ he should give it no thought.

A Righteous man should, with the Lawful rite,° abandon members of

* Two Vedic-style triṣṭubhs.

† The four *varṇas* are associated with characteristic colors: brahmins with white, kṣatriyas with red, vaiśyas with yellow, and śūdras with black.

‡ Text note: see the first endnote at 159.33.

§ A sideways offering falls on the ground outside the fire and does not go to the Gods; see the second endnote at 159.37.

‖ = those guilty of drinking liquor, brahmin-murder, or violating the teacher's bed.

his family,* even his parents. He should not even speak with them if they do not perform expiations.

One who does Wrong strikes off his sin with Meritorious Deeds of asceticism.

In saying "thief" to a thief, one acquires the same sin. But one acquires twice the sin by calling an honest man a thief.

40 A maiden who spoils herself acquires three quarters of the sin of brahmicide, while he who causes her ruin gets the remaining quarter of the sin.

The evil of menacing a brahmin does not come to rest for a hundred years (laying hands on one would be even more serious). For killing a brahmin, one would spend a thousand years in hell. Therefore, one should never menace a brahmin, and certainly never kill one. However many particles of dust it takes to soak up the blood from a brahmin's wound, for that many years the assailant lives in hell, king. But a brahmicide who is killed by the blade of a weapon in battle is cleansed. Or should he offer himself into a blazing fire, he is cleansed by that.

45 One who has drunk liquor is freed from his sin by drinking hot Vāruṇī liquor. When his body has been thoroughly scalded by that liquor, he is cleansed by his death once he dies. A brahmin then attains heavenly worlds; in fact he cannot attain them any other way.

The wicked, evil-minded man who takes himself to his teacher's bed is cleansed by his death after he embraces a red-hot *sūrmī* column.† Or he may cut off° his own penis and his testicles, and then, with them in his cupped hands, walk in a straight line in the direction of Nirṛti,‡ the southwest, until he drops dead.

Or§ he may give up his life for the sake of a brahmin; that cleanses him. Or he may offer a Horse Sacrifice or a Cow Sacrifice or the basic Soma sacrifice‖ and be completely purified in this world and after death. Likewise, the slayer of a brahmin may live as a celibate hermit for twelve years,

50 carrying a skull,° begging, and proclaiming his deed out loud. Or likewise the slayer of a brahmin may engage in asceticism, bathing morning, noon, and evening.

Likewise for one who assaults and kills° an *ātreyī* woman,# not knowing whether she is pregnant or not.° There would be a double brahmin-slaying in destroying an *ātreyī*.

* Who have "fallen."

† "A (hollow) metal column (by which, the column having been made red-hot, a criminal, especially an adulterer, would be put to death)"; see BR, s.v. "*sūrmī.*"

‡ = Evil and Death personified as a Goddess (Chaos, Disorder).

§ The text returns to the subject of expiating brahmicide; see endnote at 159.48.

‖ = Agniṣṭoma.

= a woman coming into the fertile time of her cycle; see the second endnote at 159.50cd.

One who drinks liquor may acquire purity by living on a restricted diet, being celibate, and sleeping on the ground for three years; then he should offer an Agniṣṭoma sacrifice; finally, he should give away a thousand cows with one bull.° One who has killed a vaiśya should live that way for two years and give a hundred cows with one bull. One who has killed a śūdra should live that way for one year and give ten cows with one bull. For having killed a dog, an idiot, or a donkey one should observe the śūdra vow, and so too for a cat, a blue jay, a frog, a crow, a buzzard, and a mouse.

The same Lawful measure as for a beast is declared for the slaying of any other living thing. Now I will declare other expiations in their due order.

55 For fornication° and stealing from another, one should live apart for a year; for three years, for violating the wife of a brahmin learned in the Vedas; but only for two for violating another man's wife.

He who neglects the fire should rise for three days without sipping water, eating only in the fourth part of the day, remaining sexually continent, observing the vows of a student,° standing by day and sitting by night as he lives.

He who abandons his father or his mother without good cause becomes a fallen man, Kaurava—that is the settled conclusion of the Laws. One should give them food and clothing beyond what they need; that is the rule.

When a woman is wanton, especially when she has already been restrained, he should make her perform the same observances that are imposed upon men who violate the wives of other men. When a woman abandons the bed of a better sort of man and goes to that of a worse man,

60 the king should have her eaten by dogs in a crowded public place. The wise king has the adulterous man bound on an iron bed that has been heated up, puts logs beneath it, and the wicked man shall be burned there. Great king, this punishment is also for women when they sin against their husbands.

A guilty man who has remained under accusation for a year has twice the punishment.

He who has been an associate of a fallen man for two, three, or four years, shall live the harsh life for five years, observing the vows of a hermit and living upon alms.

A man whose younger brother marries while he himself is not married, he who marries before his older brother is married, she whom the younger man marries, and he who makes the marriage happen* are all held to be "fallen" in terms of Law. They should all perform the observance that a murderer performs. One may perform the Cāndrāyaṇa fast° for a month, or

65 an Austere fast, in order to purify the evil. The younger, married brother

* Either the bride's father or the priest performing the ceremony, or both; see endnote at 159.63.

should present the girl to his unmarried older brother as a prospective daughter-in-law. Then, given permission by his older brother, the younger takes her right back. With regard to Law, she gains release from the sin and so do the two of them.

If one has intercourse with beasts—as long as it is not a cow—he is not ruined if he does not ejaculate,° for they know that man is the overlord of beasts, an eater of them.° But having put on a hide° with the hair-side out and having taken an earthen bowl, he should beg at seven houses, reciting the whole tale of his deed. Should he take meals there, he becomes clean after twelve days. Should he perform the vow without those signs of his offense, he must do so for one year.

But for intercourse with men, this expiation* is the very best. Or, if it occurs among those who are addicted to receiving the gifts of others,† he should levy as a fine all that the offender has. They say that among the Naysayers a single breath is the equivalent of one cow.

70 Having eaten the meat of a dog, a boar, a man, a rooster,‡ or a donkey, or having eaten urine or feces, he must perform the initiation ceremony once again.

When a brahmin who drinks the Soma gets a whiff of a brahmin who has drunk liquor, he may drink hot water for three days; or he may drink hot milk for three days; or having drunk hot ghee for three days, he should eat only wind for three days.

So the ancient expiation has been completely indicated, for brahmins in particular. It is to be applied,° by someone who has expert knowledge.

Vaiśampāyana said:

160.1 At this interval in the conversation, Nakula,§ who was a skilled sword-fighter, said this to the grandfather as he lay upon the bed of arrows.

"Grandfather, it is said that the bow is the best weapon. But to my mind, O you who know Law, a well-sharpened sword is best. When one's bow is broken, when one's horses are dead and gone, a person can defend himself in battle with just his sword. One man alone with a sword is able to fend

5 off men armed with bows or those using clubs or spears. So I have a doubt on this point, and I am very curious about it. What is the very best of all weapons, prince? And how did the sword come to be? For what purpose? And who brought it into being? Tell me about the earliest man who taught the use of the sword, grandfather."

Bhīṣma, who knew all the Laws, listened to the wise son of Mādrī's statement. Then, as he lay upon the bed of arrows, that consummate

* = the one just described.
† This description and the following mention of "Naysayers" likely refer to Buddhists.
‡ Probably the "Indian Red Junglefowl," see endnote at 159.70.
§ This is the one instance in all of Bhīṣma's postwar instructions where someone other than Yudhiṣṭhira puts a question to him.

virtuoso of the Veda of the Bow made a fine answer to the exalted Nakula, that pupil of Droṇa who was questioning him—an answer that had a bearing upon every form of skill in the martial arts, was subtly nuanced, well expressed with the basic sounds of the language and with accent-tones, and perfectly formed according to the principles of pedagogy.

10 "O son of Mādrī, hear the basic truth of what you are asking about. You've stirred me, good man; now I look like a mountain streaked with red veins of minerals.°

"Son, long ago this whole world was a single ocean of still water—there was no sky nor any indication of the surface of the earth; completely shrouded in darkness, untouchable, seeming deep beyond deep, it was soundless and immeasurable. The Grandfather took birth in this.

"That mighty one then created wind, fire, and sun. He created the sky above, and below he created the earth and the underworld.° He created the moon, and stars and planets in the sky, the years, days and nights, seasons,

15 and split seconds and instants of time. The Grandfather then located his body in the celestial worlds, and that blessed one then fathered sons of unsurpassed fiery brilliance: The seers Marīci, Atri, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu, Vasiṣṭha, and Aṅgiras, and the mighty lord Rudra. Dakṣa Prācetasa fathered sixty daughters, and seers of the *brahman* took all of them to engender creatures. All beings came from them: The Gods, the groups of ancestors, the Gandharvas, Apsarases, the various Rākṣasas, birds, small animals, fish, frogs, great snakes, and other creatures of various forms and

20 faculties that live in water or on dry land. The whole universe, everything mobile and stationary, was born this way, son, creatures born by sprouting,* those born from humidity,† those born of eggs, and those born of wombs. Once he had made this creation of beings, the Grandfather of all the worlds joined to it once again the Everlasting body of Laws that are read in the Vedas.

"The Gods and their teachers and house-priests stayed within these Laws. The Ādityas, Vasus, Rudras, Sādhyas, Maruts, and Aśvins; Bhṛgu, Atri, Aṅgiras, the Siddhas, and the ascetic Kāśyapa, Vasiṣṭha, Gautama, Agastya, and Nārada and Parvata; the seers, the Vālakhilyas, the Prabhāsas, the Sikatas, Ghṛtācas, Somavāyavyas, Vaikhānasas, Marīcipas,

25 Akṛṣṭas, Haṃsas, and the seers who were born from Fire, and the *vānaprastha* Pṛśnis all stayed within Brahmā's commands. But the lords of the Dānavas transgressed the Grandfather's commands; full of anger and greed, they caused a diminution of Law. Hiraṇyakaśipu, Hiraṇyākṣa, Virocana, Śambara, Vipracitti, Prahrāda, Namuci, and Bali. These and many other Daityas and Dānavas and their followers transgressed the

* = plants.
† = small insects.

bounds of Law and enjoyed themselves, committed to doing Wrong. 'We are all the same kind of beings they* are; as are the Gods, so are we,' they thought. Relying upon those ideas, they vied with the Gods.

30 "They showed no favor nor any compassion to beings, Bhārata. Violating the three methods, they tormented creatures with the rod of punishment. Out of pride, those best of the Asuras never came to an agreement with them. So at this time the seers of the *brahman* approached the blessed Brahmā on a lovely peak in the Snowy Mountains—there were stars there by the trillions!° Son, to bring this matter to completion for the sake of the inhabited realms, Brahmā, the most excellent of the Gods, stayed there on that best of mountain peaks that stretched for a hundred *yojanas*—it was piled with heaps of gems and pearls, and it was covered with forests of flowering trees. Then, at the end of a thousand years, the master performed a sacrificial rite that was done as declared in the prescriptions contained in the Kalpa.° The area of the sacrifice shone beautifully—spread all about were seers skilled in sacrifices who were 35 doing its work exactly, and the Maruts, and the blazing fires. It was adorned with golden ritual implements that shone splendidly and was thronged with crowds of the Gods. It also shone with the seers of the *brahman* who sat in attendance.

"I have heard that a most terrifying thing happened to these seers at this rite. Something arose from the sacrificial fire, scattering its flames and sparks all about the way the moon in the clear night sky is shivered into the host of stars. Long, pinched at the abdomen, it had sharp teeth and was the color of a blue lotus; it was very hard to look at, it was so extremely bright. When it rose up the earth shook; the vast ocean was all astir with 40 whirlpools and criss-crossed with waves. Shooting stars fell, there were tremendous prodigies, trees lost their branches, every quarter of the sky was troubled, an ill wind howled; beings trembled in terror without a moment's break. Having looked at the thing that had arisen with such great disturbance, the Grandfather said this to the great seers, Gods, and Gandharvas: 'This mighty thing is called "sword," and I conceived it in my mind to protect the world and slay the enemies of the Gods.' The sword then shed that form and shone, gleaming and sharp-bladed, looking like death-dealing Time poised for action.

"Brahmā then gave the blazing sword that would oppose Wrongdoing 45 to Śitikaṇṭha† Rudra, whose banner shows the bull. The blessed Rudra, who is infinite, was praised by the whole group of the seers of the *brahman;* then he picked up the sword and took a different form. Mahāliṅga‡ had four arms, and even though he stood on the earth, he touched the bottom

* = the Gods.
† = "dark-throated"; an epithet of Rudra-Śiva synonymous with Nīlakaṇṭha.
‡ = "he of the great phallus."

of the sky with his head; changing colors—blue, white, and red—flames shot out of his mouth as he looked upward. He wore a garment made of the hide of a black antelope, and on it were stars of the finest gold. On his forehead there was one large eye the like of the sun; two clear, dark brown eyes shone brightly. The God Mahādeva, his spear in his hand—he who would strike out Bhaga's* eyes—then picked up that sword that looked like the fire of the sun of Time. Having picked up a shield with three metal bosses on it—it looked like a rain-cloud flashing lightning—that God of tremendous aggressiveness and power moved down a number of different paths, waving the sword about in the sky, trying to finish off the Dānavas. 50 O Bhārata, Rudra roared a mighty roar and let loose a great laugh at that moment, and his terrible form shone brightly. The Dānavas, who were about to do horrific deeds, then observed Rudra bearing that form, and, excited, they rushed him. They showered him with stones, pieces of burning charcoal, and other terrible iron weapons with sharpened blades. Then the leading Dānava army that had never fallen was jolted with great force by Rudra's sword, and that army wavered and was disoriented. Because that one wielding the sword all by himself moved so marvelously and was so much swifter, all the Asuras thought there were a thousand 55 of him. Chopping, shattering, breaking, cutting, splitting, and harrying them, Rudra moved through groups of the Daityas like fire racing through a dry wood. Devastated by the violence of the sword—their chests, thighs, and arms hacked through, their heads cut clean off—the great Asuras fell to the earth. Under the pressure of Rudra's blows, other Dānavas who were only injured fled in every direction, howling at each other. Some entered into the earth, others went into the mountains, others went up into the sky, and others immersed themselves in water. When this tremendous, extraordinarily violent battle had taken place, the earth was covered with 60 blood-soaked mud and looked a terrible fright. O strong-armed hero, the earth was littered with the big, blood-soaked bodies of the Dānavas that seemed like *kiṃśuka*-covered† mountains. The earth appeared drenched in blood at this time—her clothing wet with blood, the dark one seemed like a drunken woman.

"After killing the Dānavas and establishing Law as the world's highest concern, Rudra discarded his terrible‡ form, and immediately Śiva took an irenic§ form. Then all the great seers and the throngs of the Gods worshiped the God of the Gods for the marvelous form of his victory. Then the blessed Rudra respectfully gave that sword, the protector of Law, still 65 wet with the blood of Dānavas, to Viṣṇu. Viṣṇu gave the sword to Marīci, the blessed Marīci gave it to the great seers, and the seers gave it to

* = relatively minor Vedic God who was blind and dispensed good fortune.
† = *Butea frondosa* Roxb., which usually has scarlet or orange flowers and drips a red juice; see endnote at 160.60.
‡ = *raudra.* § = *śiva.*

Vāsava.* Great Indra gave it to the World Guardians, then, son, the World Guardians gave this far-reaching sword to Manu the son of the Sun.† The World Guardians then said to Manu, the first of the human beings, 'You are the lord. Protect creatures with this sword, which is the germ of Law.

"'Those who transgress the bounds of Law are to be protected in accordance with Law—not according to whim—by duly apportioning punishments according to considerations of whether the matter is petty or gross.° Restraint by censure is a punishment, as is a fine of a lot of gold. Cutting a limb off of the body and execution should never occur for any petty cause. One might indicate the forms of the sword of punishment° as "censure, and so forth." There are standards for punishment because some may exceed the proper measure in punishing.'

"Having created a son of his own, Kṣupa, as the overlord of creatures, Manu gave him the sword so he could guard creatures. On earth Ikṣvāku‡ took it from Kṣupa,° Purūravas§ from Ikṣvāku; Āyus took it from him, and Nahuṣa took it from him; Yayāti got it from Nahuṣa, Pūru from him, Āmūrtarayasa from him, and King Bhūmiśaya from him. Bharata, the son of Duḥṣanta, got the sword from Bhūmiśaya, and from him Aiḍabiḍa, who knew the Laws, took it. Dhundhumāra, a lord of people, took it from Aiḍabiḍa, Kāmboja took it from Dhundhumāra, and Mucukunda took it from him. Marutta took it from Mucukunda, Raivata from Marutta, Yuvanāśva from Raivata, Raghu from Yuvanāśva; the majestic Hariṇāśva, a scion of the lineage of Ikṣvāku, took it from him, Śunaka took it from Hariṇāśva, Uśīnara, who was devoted to Law, took it from Śunaka, and the Bhojas and Yādavas acquired it from him. Śibi took it from the Yadus, Pratardana from Śibi, Aṣṭaka from Pratardana, Ruśadaśva from Aṣṭaka, Bharadvāja from Ruśadaśva, Droṇa from him, and Kṛpa from him. You and your brothers acquired this ultimate sword from him.

"The Kṛttikās° are the particular constellation of the sword, fire is its deity, its shelter is 'the red ones,'° and Rudra is its highest teacher. Learn now the eight secret names of the sword, O Pāṇḍava—he who recites them always gains victory. 'Knife, dismemberer, sword, blade, Unassailable, Germ of Royal Splendor, Victory, and Guardian of Law.' O son of Mādrī,‖ the Great Lord brought the sword forth as the first of weapons—this is established as a certainty in the Purāṇas.

"O tamer of your enemies, Pṛthu created the original bow, and with it

* = Indra.
† That is, Manu Vaivasvata, as opposed to Manu Svāyaṃbhuva.
‡ The founder of the "solar dynasty" of kings at Ayodhyā; see Chart 1 of Appendix 3.
§ = Ikṣvāku's nephew, the first major king of the "lunar dynasty," the lineage of the Bhārata Kauravas.
‖ = Nakula, Bhīṣma's questioner in this chapter.

that son of Vena protected the earth.* O son of Mādrī, you should put this standard of the seers into action. 'Those skilled in war should perform a respectful worship of the sword': thus the primary rule. The origin of the sword and all its associations have been spelled out to you exactly and at great length, O bull of the Bharatas. The man who listens in this life to this account of the sword's perfection—an account that is supreme in every way—gains fame, and he enjoys endlessness after he dies."

Vaiśaṃpāyana said:

When Bhīṣma said this and fell silent, Yudhiṣṭhira went into a private consultation with his brothers and Vidura, and he asked them a question. "People behave in concerted ways toward Law,† Riches,‡ and Love.§ Which of these is the most important? Which is in the middle? Which is the least important? To which of these must one commit himself in order to conquer the group of three?‖ You men, be pleased to make a truly definitive statement."

The quick-witted Vidura, an expert in the ways of wealth, spoke first, recollecting all of the Learned Teachings on the Law. "Great learning, asceticism, giving things up, unstinting faith, the performance of sacrificial rites, forbearance, the cleansing of one's mind, compassion, truthfulness, and self-restraint are the perfections of the soul. Cultivate these, that your mind may be free of agitation. Law and Profit are rooted in these, and they are all summed up in the one word 'well-being.'

"By means of Law did the seers cross over, upon Law have the worlds been founded, by means of Law did the Gods reach the heavens, Profit is included within Law. Law is the best in terms of its attributes, and Profit is said to be in the middle. The wise say Love is the least of them. So a man who restrains himself should have Law as his main value."

When Vidura finished speaking, the never-weary son of Pṛthā,# who was well versed in the Learned Teachings on Profit and Riches, and who was an expert in rhetoric, sang out this statement. "This world is a realm of deeds, king, and economic activity is praised: Tilling the soil, trade, animal husbandry, and various crafts. There are no actions that do not aim at some Profit.° Law and Love would not happen except for Riches and Profit, so says Holy Learning. The man who is victorious and wealthy is able to honor Law as what is best, and he is able to pursue Love, which is almost impossible to gain for those whose souls are unsophisticated. Law and Love are elements of Riches, so says Holy Learning. Those two become complete through the realization of Riches and Profit.

* = *pṛthivī*, deriving it from Pṛthu, concerning whom see *MBh* 12.59.100 ff.
† Also rendered here with "Merit."
‡ Also rendered here with "Profit" and "Profit and Riches."
§ Also rendered here with "Desire" and "Pleasure."
‖ = lust, anger, and greed according to Nīlakaṇṭha; but perhaps it refers to "all three," that is, dharma, artha, and kāma.
\# = Arjuna.

"People of better birth gather round the man whose wealth has increased, just as creatures always gather round Brahmā.

15 "Those men who have conquered their senses and control themselves, who wear their hair piled up on their heads, or shave their heads, who don antelope skins, and smear themselves with mud, who have no offspring, and live by themselves pursue material Gains.° Others—bearded men wearing ochre robes, thoroughly cloaked in modesty, learned men, calm within, who have let go of all their possessions—some of them pursue material Gains and some want heaven.° Some, observing the traditions of their various lineages, follow their own particular paths°—believers and unbelieving Naysayers committed to the highest restraint.

"Non-understanding is darkness, while understanding is illumination.°

"The man who can have his servants bask in luxuries and make his enemies suffer punishments is a man of Riches. O best of those with sound judgment, this is what I think, just as it is. Listen now to what these two have to say, speech ready in their mouths."

20 Immediately Nakula and Sahadeva, Mādrī's two sons, who were well-versed in Law and Profit, made this further statement. "Sitting, lying down, moving about, and standing still—one should be doing positive work for Profit by all means high and low. But when this,* which is so hard to get, and which is most dear, has been fully realized, then, obviously, he obtains his Loves, there is no doubt of it. What is Profit is thoroughly connected to Law; what is Law is everywhere joined with Profit, just the way honey is related to nectar. Therefore, we esteem the two of them. He who has no Riches has no Love, likewise he who has no Lawful Merit has no Riches. What then? Because of this people are afraid of someone who is

25 alienated from Law or Riches. Therefore, he who is in complete control of himself and has Law as his main value should try to realize Riches. Everyone is agreeable when beings trust him. One should pursue Law first, then Profit that is Lawful. After that he should pursue Love, for that is the fruit of one Riches attained."

The two sons of the Aśvin twins stopped after saying this. Bhīmasena then began to make this statement. "The man without Desire does not want Riches. The man without Desire does not want Merit. The man without Desire does not Love. So Desire is superior. The seers were joined to Desire when they were intent upon their asceticism and thoroughly

30 restrained, eating roots, fruits, and leaves, or eating only wind. So too others who are virtuosos of Veda recitation, who engage in discussions of the Vedas, in the performance of memorial rites for their ancestors and rites of sacrifice, and in receiving donations. Traders, farmers, herdsmen, artisans, craftsmen, and those who do the rites of the Gods are hitched to their works by Desire. Filled with Desire, some men dive into the ocean.

* = Profit, Riches, Wealth, Gain.

Desire has many different forms. Everything is held together by Desire and Love. There is not, never was, nor will there ever be anything that does not consist essentially of Desire.° This one is the abiding essence, king; Law and Profit depend upon it. As butter is to curds, so is Desire to Profit and Law. Sesame oil is better than the mash that is left after the seeds are pressed,*

35 ghee is better than diluted buttermilk, fruits and flowers are better than wood, so Pleasure is preferred to Law and Profit. As nectar, like honey, comes from flowers, so does happiness come from Pleasure.

> † "Enjoy Love, king, by getting together with young women dressed up in lovely clothes and nice jewelry, who are sexy and hot and say sweet things to you. Truly, king, Desire rushes upon you fast!
>
> "This is what I think as I stand in this council. Don't ponder it long, son of Dharma. If the righteous people were to all agree with this very valuable statement, there would be the greatest kindness everywhere.
>
> "Law, Profit, and Love should be pursued equally; the man who pursues one alone is the most backward of men. Then they say he who is an expert in two of them is a middling man. And he who is devoted to the entire group of three is the highest of men. He is wise, and his friends slather sandal-paste upon him, and he wears pretty jewels and garlands."
>
> Then, having declared this speech both synoptically and analytically, Yudhiṣṭhira's younger brother Bhīma stopped.
>
> 40 A moment later the highly learned King of Law, the most excellent of the supporters of Law, having perfectly thought through what Bhīma had said, uttered the truth with a smile.
>
> "Undoubtedly all you good men have settled conclusions from the Learned Teachings on Law, and you know your authorities. But the only definitive statement I have heard is the one which I made while I still sought to understand. Now listen with clear minds to my statement, as I am compelled to speak at this time.
>
> "The man who is devoted neither to evil nor to good; not to Riches, Merit, or Pleasure; who is free of fault and regards gold and clay to be the same—he has escaped doing things on account of pleasure or pain.

* = "oil-cake."

† Thirteen mostly regular, upajāti triṣṭubh stanzas; nos. 47 and 48 are jagatīs.

"Beings subject to birth and death, and to the decay of old age and the corruption of disease have been instructed repeatedly by these teachers and those; they praise Absolute Freedom, but we know nothing of this.

"The Blessed Svayaṃbhū said, 'One who is not bound to his affections does not have these.'* Wise men dedicated to Extinction,† say this too. Therefore, a man should have no likes or dislikes.

45 "But the man who acts according to his Desires does not make this‡ his main thing. As I am directed, so do I act. Fate directs all beings. All of you, realize that fate is very powerful.

"One cannot attain what is unattainable§ by doing any deed. Know that what is going to be all comes to be. Even he who lacks some of the group of three finds this thing.‖ Thus this secret is for the world's well-being."

After hearing this excellent, compact, thoughtful statement that was much better reasoned than those others, the Pāṇḍavas roared and rejoiced, and bowed to that hero of the Kurus with their hands folded in reverence.

O prince, after they listened to that thoughtful statement of the son of Pṛthā—which had been uttered with such pleasantly realized basic sounds, syllables, and words, from which every blemish of language had been expelled—those Indras among men praised the speech. Then he whose courage had never diminished questioned the son of the river** about the Law beyond these.††

12(85d) The Story of the Ungrateful Brahmin

162–67 (168–73; 6264–6456‡‡)
162 (168; 6264). Yudhiṣṭhira asks Bhīṣma to explain the importance and unique value of true friends (1). Bhīṣma lists

* = birth, death, old age, disease. † = *nirvāṇa.*
‡ = *mokṣa*, Absolute Freedom. § = *mokṣa.* ‖ = *mokṣa.*
Stanzas 47 and 48 are upajāti jagatī stanzas. ** = Bhīṣma.
†† Referring to Bhīṣma's upcoming instruction of Yudhiṣṭhira on *mokṣa;* see endnote at 161.48.
‡‡ Pages 585–86 of the Calcutta edition were bound out of order.

the types of people to avoid (5–15). Next he lists the virtuous people one should have as friends (15–25). Yudhiṣṭhira asks for elaboration on this topic; he wants to hear about the ungrateful man who attacks a friend. Bhīṣma tells him The Story of the Ungrateful Brahmin *(25).*

An impoverished, dark-skinned, Gautama brahmin, ignorant of the Veda, wandered from the central lands into a northern village of barbarian hunters in search of alms. A wealthy man in the village gave him a house and support and a widowed woman as wife. The brahmin stayed there for a long time, learned weapons and hunting, and became a violent man like his hosts (25–35). A proper brahmin learned in the Veda, an old friend from his own country, visited this village. This brahmin upbraided Gautama for being a fallen brahmin, and Gautama pledged to reform himself (35–45).
163 (169; 6317). Gautama left the village, wandered in the direction of the ocean, and fell in with a caravan. He escaped when the caravan was routed by an elephant and fled until he came to an idyllic wood. He came to a majestic banyan tree and took shelter beneath it (1–15). At sunset the resplendent, golden-feathered king of the cranes (Nāḍījaṅgha, the son of the Progenitor Kaśyapa by a daughter of Dakṣa), "King Dharma," returned to this tree, his home, having paid court to Brahmā in heaven. The hungry Gautama planned to kill the bird, but the crane welcomed him as a guest (15–20).
164 (170; 6342). The crane extended himself greatly to offer Gautama sumptuous hospitality (1–5). In conversation Gautama introduced himself only as a "Gautama brahmin," and he told the crane that he was poor and wanted to find riches. The crane directed Gautama to go to his wealthy friend, Virūpākṣa, the lord of the Rākṣasas whose palace was not far off (5–15). Gautama traveled to the gates of Meruvraja, Virūpākṣa's opulent city. He was announced to the king as a friend of Nāḍījaṅgha and was quickly ushered through the city to the palace (15–25).
165 (171; 6368). Virūpākṣa received him with honor, and under questioning Gautama revealed to the king that he now lived in a barbarian village with a śūdra wife. Despite misgivings about Gautama's status, Virūpākṣa decided to include Gautama in his scheduled feeding of a thousand pious brahmins (1–5). The king fed the brahmins well on diamond-studded plates of gold and then gave them many luxurious presents and gems. He then bid them leave and take whatever dishes they wished, commanding the Rākṣasas to grant them

safe passage for a day (10–20). Gautama took so much gold he was exhausted when he returned to the banyan tree. The crane welcomed him back and fed him, but Gautama, worrying about his long journey back to the village, decided to kill the crane to have food on his way (20–30).
166 (172; 6403). Gautama killed and butchered Nāḍījaṅgha that night while the bird slept trustingly, and then he set out to return to the barbarian village (1). Virūpākṣa missed his friend's visits after a couple days and feared that the fallen brahmin might have done the bird harm. Virūpākṣa sent his son to investigate, the truth was discovered, and Gautama was dragged before Virūpākṣa. All the Rākṣasas were stricken with grief, and the king ordered that Gautama be executed as an ingrate and eaten. The ingrate was executed, but no being—no Rākṣasa, no barbarians, not even a carrion-eating animal—would eat him (5–25). Bhīṣma comments that ingratitude has no expiation (20–25).
167 (173; 6430). Virūpākṣa had Nāḍījaṅgha cremated with proper rituals. Surabhi, mother of all cows, appeared over the pyre and dripped milk on the body, which revived the king of the cranes (1–5). Indra arrived and explained that the crane had died because Brahmā had cursed him for failing to pay court to Brahmā. Nāḍījaṅgha then worshiped Indra and requested that his "dear friend Gautama" be revived too. Indra complied, and the crane embraced the ingrate and sent him home with his gold. Nāḍījaṅgha paid court to Brahmā after these events, and Gautama went home, produced two evil sons, and was cursed by the Gods to end up in hell (5–15). Bhīṣma encourages Yudhiṣṭhira never to be ungrateful or injurious toward his friends (15–20).

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

162.1 Grandfather of great wisdom, O enlarger of the fame of the Kurus, I am going to declare a certain question. Please explain the matter to me completely. What are agreeable men like? What men are most pleasing? Tell me, which men are the most reliable in the present and for the future? No amount of stunning wealth, nor any kin or relatives can occupy the place friends occupy, that's what I think. A friend who will listen is very hard to come by, and so is a friend who truly wishes your welfare. O best of those who support the Law, please explain all this to me completely.

Bhīṣma said:

5 Yudhiṣṭhira, king, give me all your attention while I tell you truly about

men with whom you should ally yourself and men with whom you should not. Everyone should abandon the sort of man° who is greedy, or cruel, or who has abandoned Law; who is a low-down cheat, is mean-spirited, of wicked behavior, suspicious of everyone, lazy, long-winded, devious, obnoxious, one who has molested his teacher's wife, one who runs away in the face of calamity, a base man who is shameless, one who sees evil everywhere, a Naysayer, one who criticizes the Vedas, one whose senses are completely unfocused in the world, one who lives in devotion to his desires, who is not truthful, who is hostile to people, who does not abide by his agreements, an ignorant gossip, who is selfish, who is committed 10 to wickedness, who has a bad character, who has a crudely formed spirit, who is a malicious fraud; a man who is always using his friends to pursue some purpose of his own, who is always bent upon some goal and wants something; who, dull-witted, is never satisfied when things are going along as well as they can; who relates to a friend as if he were an enemy, O bull among men; who becomes angry without any occasion, who becomes disaffected for no reason, who wrongfully abandons his friend's best interests all of a sudden; who becomes a fool when there has been some small offense done against him, even when it was done unwittingly; someone who dislikes his friends, but woos them when he has some need, O overlord of men; who is an enemy wearing the face of a friend, who flatters you but does not look you in the eye, who is not attracted to what is noble.

15 The drunkard, the quarrelsome man, the cruel man, the harsh man, and he who is coldhearted; the man who always annoys others, he who harms his friends, and he who takes pleasure in killing living beings—the lowest is the ungrateful man; you should never ally yourself with him in any way. You should never ally yourself with one who is always looking for your weak point.

Now listen to those with whom you should ally yourself. Those born in good families, those fully accomplished in speech, those versed in various sciences and Knowledge,° who remember their friends, who are grateful, who know everything, who have no bitter grief, who are perfectly accomplished in sweetness, who are true to their promises, who have conquered their senses, who exercise regularly, who have supported their sons, who have come from good families, are good-looking, endowed with good qualities, not greedy, tireless, and have no significant faults—these a 20 king should take. Strictly virtuous men, who follow good conduct as far as they are able and are content, lord. They do not get angry when there is no call to do so, do not become disaffected for no reason, and, feeling alienated, they do not get angry within; they are conversant with business affairs, make the business of a friend paramount, and trouble themselves very much. They never lose the rosy glow of affection° toward their friends, the

way a woolen cloth dyed red never loses its redness. They do not exhibit such faults as greed and obsession toward riches or young women, are trusting of their friends and devoted to their relatives, hold gold and clay to be of equal value, never have the idea of being false to their friends, live modestly, have dispensed with wealth and ornaments, encourage their followers, and are always dedicated to the interests of their master. When a king allies himself with such excellent men, his realm stretches out before him like the light of the sun.

25 You should ally yourself with the highest of men, those steeped in the authoritative traditions of learning, who have their anger under control, who are strong and love battle, who are long-suffering, and endowed with good traits of character.

Of those that I mentioned who are full of faults, O blameless one, the lowest one of them all is the ungrateful man who attacks his friend. That bad man should be forsaken, and that is a settled point.

Yudhiṣṭhira said:

I want to hear the elaboration of this matter at length, prince. Tell me about this one you've just mentioned, the ungrateful man who injures his friend.

Bhīṣma said:

All right, overlord of men, I will tell you an ancient account of something that happened among the foreign barbarians up in the north.

A brahmin from the central region, a brahmin who had black limbs and who had not studied the *brahman*,* spotted an inhabited village and

30 entered it with the desire of begging alms. There was a wealthy barbarian there who knew the specific characteristics of all the social Orders; he was favorable to brahmins, faithful to his promises, and he was devoted to making generous gifts. The brahmin came around to his house and asked for alms; he requested a shelter in which to dwell, and alms to last for a year. The barbarian gave that brahmin those things and a seemly piece of new cloth and a woman in the prime of her life who had lost her husband. That brahmin, a descendent of Gotama,† was thrilled to take all of this from the barbarian, and he lived happily with that woman in an excellent house. That Gautama brahmin lent a hand in the affairs of the barbarian's household, and he stayed there in the Śabara's‡ opulent house through the

35 rainy season. And he made a great effort to master archery. The Gautama brahmin shot geese everywhere within the range of his arrows with the same skill as a barbarian. He became very violent and merciless, and delighted in killing living beings; he came to be the same as the barbarians because of his close contact with them.

* = Veda. † Thus a Gautama brahmin.
‡ = the name of the barbarian's particular kind.

Many months went by as he lived in the barbarian village happily, killing many birds. Some time later another brahmin came to that place. His hair was piled up in braids upon his head, and he was wearing rags and the skin of a black antelope. He was perfectly pure, dedicated to the daily recitation of the Veda, was properly trained, ate limited amounts of food, was dedicated to the *brahman* and an expert in the Vedas, and he was celibate. He arrived in the barbarian village where the Gautama brahmin

40 was; he was from that one's country, and he was a dear friend of his. In that village populated with barbarians he wandered in every direction searching for the brahmins' houses and avoiding taking any food from śūdras. Then that highest of brahmins entered Gautama's house, and when Gautama returned the two of them met. The brahmin saw the sinful man when he came to the door of the house—he was carrying a load of geese in one hand and a bow in the other, his limbs were smeared with blood, he looked like a cannibal—and when the visitor recognized that this was the brahmin, fallen, who was returning home, he was embarrassed. He said this to him.

"What are you doing in your foolishness? You are a brahmin from a good family, well known in the central country! How did you become a

45 barbarian? Remember the first brahmins of old, who were famous for being consummate experts in the Vedas. You were born in their lineage! The way you are now, you are a disgrace to your family! Wake up to who you really are, to the truth of yourself, your character, your learning, and your discipline. Recall your former tenderness and leave this dwelling, brahmin."

When his well-meaning friend had said this to him, king, he made a decision and gave this pained answer. "O best of brahmins, I have nothing. I do not know the Vedas. O best of brahmins, understand that I came here just to subsist. O brahmin seer, just from seeing you I realize that my goal is accomplished. Tomorrow we will both return to our proper selves;° now stay here tonight.

Bhīṣma said:

163.1 When night had turned to dawn and that highest of brahmins had gone, the Gautama brahmin left and headed toward the ocean, Bhārata. He observed some overseas traders upon that road, and he went on toward the ocean in the company of their caravan. But, great king, most in that caravan were killed by a rutting elephant in some mountain canyon. The brahmin escaped from that caravan somehow and, fleeing for his life, he ran to the north.

5 Bereft of everything—caravan, country, and money—and all alone, he ran through the forest like a wild man. Then he got on a road that led toward the ocean, and eventually he came to a beautiful woods of great flowering trees. It was inhabited by Yakṣas and Kiṃnaras and was adorned

with mango groves and flowering trees for all seasons—it was like Nandana, Indra's park in heaven! There were groves of *śāla* trees, and palms, and *dhava* trees, fig trees, cinnamon trees, and aloe trees and the best sandalwood. The most excellent birds were warbling beautifully on every side in clean, beautiful mountain meadows that were very fragrant. And some birds there, known as *bhāruṇḍas*, had human faces. And there were *bhūliṅga* birds and others all about as he moved toward the ocean. 10 The Gautama brahmin traveled on, listening to the extremely pleasant and beautiful songs of the birds.

Then, on a very pleasant and beautiful stretch of land that was level and pretty and heaped up with golden sand—a place that seemed like heaven—he saw a great, round banyan tree graced with Royal Splendor. Adorned with suitably beautiful branches, it looked like a parasol. The base of its trunk was well "watered" with chips of the very best sandalwood. This marvelous flowering tree was like the throne of the marvelously rich Grandfather. When he saw this excellent tree, so loved by sages, Gautama was delighted. Surrounded by flowering trees, it was pure and perfect, like the house of a God. He joyfully went up to it and sat down under its 15 branches. As Gautama sat there, Kaurava, a clean, pleasant, soothing wind blew, caressing the flowers and refreshing all of Gautama's limbs. When that favorable wind touched the exhausted brahmin's body, he felt very good. He fell asleep, and the sun went down.

Then, in the twilight after the sun went down, the very highest of birds came back to his home from Brahmā's paradise. It was the very wise king of the cranes, Nāḍījaṅgha. He was the direct offspring of the Progenitor Kaśyapa° and a dear friend of Brahmā. Famed as "King Dharma,"* he had no equal on the earth. He was the son of a divine maiden, and, as he was possessed of Royal Splendor, and learned, he looked like the king of the 20 Gods. Plumed in burnished gold, all his limbs adorned with ornaments that shone like the sun, he blazed with Royal Splendor, the child of a God. Gautama was amazed when he saw the bird arrive. And, since hunger and thirst coursed throughout his whole being, he studied that bird with the intention of killing it.

King Dharma said:

Welcome to you, sir. It was good luck that you came to my house, brahmin. The sun has set and it is twilight now. You have come to my home as a dear guest, since I have never heard criticism of you.° When you go in the morning you shall have been honored by the rite prescribed in the rules.

* = Rājadharma; different from, though close to, the title of Yudhiṣṭhira and Yama, Dharmarāja, "King of Dharma."

Bhīṣma said:

164.1 Gautama was surprised when he heard that sweet voice. Filled with curiosity, king, he looked at King Dharma.

King Dharma said:

Sir, I am the son of Kaśyapa, and Dākṣāyaṇī was my mother. You are an excellent guest, welcome, bull among brahmins.

Bhīṣma said:

He offered that one hospitality with the rite prescribed in the rules, and then he fashioned for him a wonderful cushion made of flowers from a *śāla* tree. Next he prepared for him some of the large fish that are found in those regions traversed by the river Gaṅgā, over which the chariot of King 5 Bhagīratha used to roll. And the son of Kaśyapa presented the scion of Gotama, his guest, with a roaring fire and some nice fat fish. When the brahmin had eaten, that noble-minded bird fanned him with his wings to dispel his fatigue. Then, as the brahmin sat at ease, the bird questioned him about his *gotra*, and he replied, "I am a Gautama brahmin," and said nothing else. The bird then presented him with a wonderful, richly fragrant bed made of leaves scented with marvelous flowers, and Gautama lay down there comfortably. As the Gautama brahmin lay upon the bed, Bhārata, the talkative Kāśyapa, the king of the cranes, asked about his 10 reason for coming. Gautama then said to him, "I am poor, wise one. I wanted to go to the ocean to acquire some wealth."

The Kāśyapa was delighted and said to him, "You need not crave any longer. You have done what you set out to do, O best of brahmins. You will go back to your house with wealth. According to the thinking of Bṛhaspati, there are four ways that riches come: inheritance, fate, work, and friends. I have appeared as a friend for you. And you are a friend for me. So I will exert myself on your behalf, so that you will be rich."

Then, at dawn, after asking if the brahmin was comfortable, the crane told him, "Go this way, my good man, and you will have done what you 15 set out to do. Three *yojanas* down is the great overlord of the Rākṣasas, Virūpākṣa. He has a tremendous army, but he is a friend of mine. Go to him, you first-rate brahmin. Acting on my say-so, he will give you the wishes you want, there is no doubt of it."

The descendent of Gotama then set out, king, without a trace of fatigue. He traveled down the path quickly, admiring along the way the most wonderful stands of sandalwood and aloe and cinnamon trees, and eating as much as he liked of fruit as good as ambrosia. Eventually he came to a city called Meruvraja, which had a stone wall and rampart and a 20 stone gateway with a lock-mechanism and bolt made of stone. He was announced to the wise lord of the Rākṣasas as a dear guest sent by his dear friend. Then, Yudhiṣṭhira, the lord of the Rākṣasas said to his runners, "Lead this Gautama here from the city gate immediately." So men clad in

white went out from that superb castle to the gate of the city, calling out "Gautama." Great king, the Rākṣasa lord's runners told the brahmin, "Hurry up! Come immediately! The king wants to see you. The overlord of the Rākṣasas, the great leader Virūpākṣa, is in a hurry to see you. So you must comply immediately." That Gautama brahmin then rushed ahead, all his fatigue gone in his amazement. As he saw the opulence of the city, he was completely amazed. In the company of the king's servants, the brahmin rushed straight to the king's palace with a keen desire to see that lord of the Rākṣasas.

25

Bhīṣma said:

165.1 He was announced to the king once he entered the palace. The lord of the Rākṣasas received him with honor and, the brahmin sat down on a splendid seat. When questioned about his *gotra* and the school of the Veda he belonged to, and about his daily recitations of the Veda, and his celibacy, the brahmin did not declare anything but his *gotra*. The king then asked this brahmin who lacked the brilliance of the *brahman*, who had stopped reciting the Vedas daily, who knew only his *gotra*, where he lived. "Where is your dwelling, good sir? What is the *gotra* of your brahmin wife? Tell me truly. Have no fear. Relax and be comfortable."

The Gautama brahmin said:

5 I was born in the middle country. I live in a Śabara village, and my wife is a śūdra widow. I tell you the truth!

Bhīṣma said:

The king then thought: "How can this be the case? How could there be any merit for me in this?" He thought to himself, "This one, who is a brahmin by birth alone, is a friend of the exalted son of Kaśyapa, and he was sent here to me by that one. I will do him a favor, for he has always depended upon me. He is a kinsmen, a brother to me, and a dear friend. Today, the full-moon day of Kārttika,* a thousand excellent brahmins shall eat my food. This one shall eat too. And I shall give him some of my riches."

10 Then a thousand learned brahmins arrived there, well groomed and well dressed, freshly bathed, wearing uncut linen garments. O lord of the people, Virūpākṣa received those most excellent brahmins when they arrived with the rite prescribed in the rules. At the Rākṣasa king's command, his servants spread blankets out on the ground and set down cushions for the brahmins, O most excellent of the Bharatas. Sitting upon those cushions, those most excellent brahmins were honored by the king, and, great king, they shone there like so many moons. He then presented the brahmins with shiny clean plates of gold studded with diamonds that were filled with the best foods and overflowing with honey and butter.

* = mid-October to mid-November; see endnote at 165.9.

15 Many brahmins always received this kindness of his, this prized meal, regularly on the full moon days in the months of Āṣāḍha* and Māgha.† But we have heard that there was a difference on the full-moon day in Kārttika at the passing away of autumn. The king then presented the brahmins with riches—gold, silver, gems, pearls, very precious diamonds, cat's eye gems, black antelope skins, and Rāṅku deerskins. After giving away heaps of jewels as a present to those excellent brahmins, Bhārata, the glorious Virūpākṣa said to them, "Most excellent of brahmins, take these riches as you can and as you like. And then go home, taking with you whatever dishes held your food."

20 When the exalted lord of the Rākṣasas had said this, those brahmin bulls took those riches as they liked. Then all those brahmins in their clean clothes were very pleased, having been honored by those wonderful, precious riches. Imposing a prohibition on the Rākṣasas, the Rākṣasa lord again addressed those brahmins, who had come from every direction. "Brahmins, now, for this one day, there is no danger to you from Rākṣasas anywhere. Enjoy yourselves as you like and go before too long." All the groups of brahmins then hurried off every which way.

25 Gautama too hurried off, having taken a load of gold. Hauling it with great difficulty, hero, he returned to the banyan tree and sat down exhausted. He was worn out and hungry. That excellent bird King Dharma then came to him, king. Fond of his friend, he greeted Gautama with a welcome. The wise bird drove off his friend's weariness by flapping his wings and paid homage to him. Then he prepared a meal for him. After he had eaten, Gautama felt reinvigorated, and he thought to himself, "I took this tremendous load of beautiful gold out of greed and delusion. Also, my journey is a long one, and there is nothing to eat on the road to sustain my life. What am I going to do to stay alive?" So did he ponder. Then, foreseeing nothing to eat along the road, O tiger among men, that ingrate thought this to himself. "This lord of the cranes right here beside me is a heap of meat. I'll kill him and take him with me, and I'll be gone in a jiffy."

30

Bhīṣma said:

166.1 Now that king of birds had made a fire nearby for protection—Blazing Fire, whose charioteer is the wind. The king of the cranes trustingly went to sleep beside the brahmin, but that rotten ingrate stayed awake with the intention of killing him. He slew that trusting bird with a blazing firebrand. And when he had killed the bird, he was overjoyed, and he failed to see what would ensue. The brahmin removed the bird's wings and feathers and roasted him over the fire. Then he picked up the gold and left in a rush.

5 As a second day passed Virūpākṣa said to his son, "Son, I have not seen the excellent bird King Dharma today. Every morning at twilight he goes

* = mid-June to mid July. † = mid-January to mid-February.

to praise Brahmā, and that bird never returns home without looking in on me. Now for two days he has failed to come to my place at twilight. So my heart is troubled; I must find out about my friend. That brahmin who did not recite the Vedas, who was bereft of the brilliance of the *brahman*, went back there to King Dharma, and I fear that most wretched of brahmins might have killed him. I could tell by looking at him that his general conduct was bad, that his intelligence was dull, that he did not perform rituals. He was as black as the lowest of tribal barbarians, and he had a 10 rough look about him. That Gautama went there, so my mind is anxious. Son, hurry up and go where King Dharma lives and find out if that pure soul is still alive. Right away!"

His son hurried off to the banyan tree with some Rākṣasas and observed King Dharma's skeleton there. Wailing in grief, the son of the sagacious lord of the Rākṣasas rushed as fast as he possibly could in pursuit of Gautama. The Rākṣasas caught Gautama not far off. They also recovered the body of King Dharma, minus its wings, its bones, and its feet, and then they took the body and went swiftly back to Meruvraja. They displayed King Dharma's body to the king and showed him the ungrateful man, the 15 wicked Gautama brahmin. The king and his councillors and his priest all wailed in grief when they saw the bird—there was a tremendous cry of pain in the palace. The entire castle—all its women and children—went out of its mind. The king then said to his son, "Execute this wicked man. Then all here shall feast upon his flesh as they like. Rākṣasas, my judgment is, 'You shall kill this man of wicked conduct, wicked deeds, wicked heart, and wicked resolve.'"

When their lord had said this to them, those horribly ferocious Rākṣasas did not want to eat him. "He has bad karma," they said. "The right thing is that this lowest of men should be given to the tribal barbarians." That, 20 great king, is what those Night-creeps said to their lord. They bowed down to the overlord of Rākṣasa hordes and said to him, "Please do not give him to us to eat; he is polluted." The king of the Rākṣasas then told the Night-creeps, "So be it. Give this ingrate to the tribal barbarians right now, Rākṣasas. With hammers and chisels his servants cut that wicked one up into pieces and gave him to the tribal barbarians. But the barbarians did not want to eat the evil-doer either. Not even the carrion-feeding animals would consume the ingrate, O lord of kings.

Expiation has been enjoined for one who kills a brahmin, for one who drinks liquor, for a thief, or for one who has broken a vow; but, king, there 25 is no expiation for an ingrate. An ingrate is a vicious man who harms a friend; he is the lowest of men; the carrion-eaters will not eat him, nor will the worms, nor any others.

Bhīṣma said:

167.1 The Rākṣasa then had a pyre made for the king of the cranes, one decked out with many jewels and fragrances and hangings. Then, king,

the king of the Rākṣasas lit the fire and cremated the king of the cranes and performed all the rites for the dead according to the prescribed rules. At that time the Goddess Surabhi, one of the lovely daughters of Dakṣa,* appeared above him, dripping with milk. O blameless one, foam mixed with milk was dripping from her mouth, and it fell onto the pyre of King 5 Dharma. And then, blameless one, those drippings brought the king of the cranes back to life. The king of the cranes jumped up and went over to Virūpākṣa.

Then the king of the Gods came to Virūpākṣa's castle and told Virūpākṣa, "What a stroke of fortune that he's alive!" Indra then told Virūpākṣa the story of the prior background of these events. He told him how Brahmā had put a curse on King Dharma. "When the king of the cranes would not pay court to Brahmā, the Grandfather angrily said this of the king of the cranes: 'Since that fool, that lowest of cranes has not come to my 10 throne, that rotten one will end up being killed before long.' So this bird was slain by Gautama because of Brahmā's sentence. The crane was then brought back to life by Brahmā when he was sprinkled with the nectar of immortality." King Dharma bowed down in worship to the Smasher of Cities† and said to him, "If your mind is disposed to favor me, O Smasher of Cities, may it have my very dear friend Gautama brought back to life." Vāsava assented to his request and brought Gautama back to life and presented him to his friend. The lord of the cranes was overjoyed, and he went over to his friend and embraced him as that one held his baggage and his dish. Then King Dharma, the lord of the cranes, dismissed that wicked man with his wealth and went back to his own home.

15 The crane then went to Brahmā's throne when it suited him, and Brahmā paid the exalted one the respect due a guest. Now Gautama returned once again to the Śabara village and engendered on his śūdra wife evil-doing sons. The throngs of the Gods placed on him the terrific curse that after this ingrate had engendered sons for a long time in the belly of his remarried widow of a wife, he would arrive in a great hell.

Nārada told me all this some time ago, Bhārata, and I have presented this tremendous story from my memory, O bull among men, and recounted it all to you accurately, sir. How could an ingrate have any glory? How could he have any position? How any happiness? You should never trust 20 an ingrate. There is no expiation for an ingrate. And especially, a man should never injure his friends; he who injures his friends arrives in a horrible, endless hell. Blameless one, one should always be grateful and have love for his friends. Truth comes to be from friends; power comes to be from friends. The perceptive man will honor his friend with the very best hospitality. A wicked, shameless ingrate should be abandoned by the wise.

* Surabhi is a cow; regarding Dakṣa's daughters, see the note to 12.163.18.
† = Indra.

He who harms his friends is a live coal in his family, is wicked, is the lowest of men.

O best of the supporters of law, I have now told you about the wicked ingrate who harmed his friend. What more would you like to hear?

Vaiśampāyana said:

Janamejaya, when Yudhiṣṭhira had heard the exalted Bhīṣma relate this story, it cheered him up.

Appendixes

Appendix 1: Departures from the Pune Text of the Mahābhārata

It has not been one of my objectives in this work to examine or judge the editorial work of V. G. Paranjpe, who edited the *Strīparvan*, nor of S. K. Belvalkar, who edited the *Śāntiparvan*, nor to evaluate the principles of editing developed, applied, and enforced on the other editors by V. S. Sukthankar. Sukthankar's approach is not above question, and his and his colleagues' execution of the stated editorial principles may not be perfect in every instance, but it is fair to say that the two editors named above were generally rigorous, and their editions conform to Sukthankar's principles reasonably faithfully at the very least. I make these points because, as many have noticed, and many more will notice, the text of the *Śāntiparvan* is often very problematic, sometimes seemingly garbled. I have not tried to solve these textual problems, because that is a fundamentally different task from translation. I have worked as hard as I can to construe the text given us by the editor. I have done this even when I fear the text is in bad shape, in order to test the text as fully as possible while tampering with it only as a last resort. We must try as hard as we can, within reason, to understand what is generally the best text that can be established on the basis of the manuscript evidence. Only then is it permissible to begin proposing emendations, a task left for the future.

That said, I have upon a few occasions been driven to differ with these learned scholars. My few amendments to the Pune text of Books 11 and 12 are listed below. I have adhered to two criteria in proposing amendments to the constituted Pune text. First, the proposed amendment must adopt a reading more in conformity with the Sukthankar principles of the Pune edition. Second, the amendment must make a significant difference to the reading or understanding of the text.

In addition to departing from the syllables read as the constituted text, I also sometimes segment the given syllables differently from the text as

printed. I give notice of these smaller departures in "reading notes" in the endnote annotations. These differences in construing the constituted syllables are a matter of interpretation rather than editing. And though I have tried to give notice of my deviations from the editors' readings in every instance, I may have occasionally read the constituted text with a segmentation of its syllables different from what is printed and inadvertently failed to give notice of having done so, unconsciously thinking my decision will be plain to all who look at the Sanskrit text.

The List of Departures

Here is a listing of readings adopted for the translation that are different from what is printed in the Pune edition of the Bhandarkar Institute. Given here are only the locations and the substitutions I have made. My alterations to the text are flagged in the footnotes to the translation and explanations of these changes are given, case by case, in the endnotes to each passage.

11.8.39a. Typographical error: Read *dharmaparo* instead of *karmaparo.*
12.7.19b. Text amendment: Read *-samanvitāḥ* for *-asamañjasāḥ.*
12.10.4b. Text amendment: Read *vidāma* for *vidyāma.*
12.14.18d. Text amendment: Read *na saṃkocena cāpyuta* for Belvalkar's emendation *notkocena tathāpyuta.*
12.18.20b. Text amendment: Read *dhānāmuṣṭir anugrahaḥ* for *dhānāmuṣṭiparigrahaḥ.*
12.37.14c. Text amendment: Read *na hi te dharmā yeṣāṃ dharmo na vidyate,* instead of *na hi taṃ dharmam.*
12.47.6a. Typographical error: Read *muniganair* instead of *muniganar.*
12.54.35c. Text amendment: Read *manudharmāṇām* for *anudharmāṇām.*
12.57.1c. Text amendment: Read *praśasyate na* for *praśāmyate ca.*
12.59.73b. Reading note: Read *māyāyogaś ca* for *māyā yogaś ca.*
12.60.44. Text amendment: Read *sṛṣṭaḥ* for *dṛṣṭaḥ* in pāda d.
12.61.19c. Reading note: Read *tathāvedaṃ* for *tathā vedaṃ.*
12.76.26b. Text amendment: Read *mahatām* for *vahatām.*
12.83.18b. Reading note: Read *sarvātmanāgataḥ* for *sarvātmanā gataḥ.*
12.83.48a. Text amendment: Read *tenaivopendhanenainam* for *tenaivopendhano nūnam.*
12.89.18b. Typographical error: Read *prasaṅgo* for *prasaṅge.*
12.99.47a. Text amendment: Read *bālam* for *balam.*
12.104.18c. Reading note: Read *nayaḥ* for *na yaḥ.*
12.104.43a. Reading note: Read *anyair atiśāstravedibhiḥ* for *anyai ratiśāstravedibhiḥ.*
12.109.22b. Text amendment: Read *prītāḥ pitāmahāḥ* for *prītaḥ pitāmahaḥ.*

12.120.15c. Text amendment: Read *bala* for *bāla.*
12.120.15d. Text amendment: Read *sannivāsyān nivāsayet* for *sannivāsāni vāsayet.*
12.120.43c. Reading note: I read *brahma yattam,* not *yat tam.*
12.121.41c. Reading note: Read *balena yaś ca* for *bale nayaś ca.*
12.124.27c. Text amendment: Read *śrutvā* for *sṛtvā.*
12.128.22b. Text amendment: Read *nirvṛtasya* for *nidhṛtasya.*
12.134.9b. Text amendment: Read *caṇḍapipīlikam* for *cāṇḍapipīlikam.*
12.137.85d. Text amendment: Read *māghamāsegavā iva* for *māghamā segavām iva.*
12.139.75c. Text amendment: Read *ahaṃ punar vratanityāśayātmā* for *ahaṃ punar varta ity āśayātmā.*
12.140.15c. Reading note: Read *vākchurīm attvā* for *vākchurīmattvā.*
12.144.2f. Reading note: Read *patihīnāmanasvinī* for *patihīnā manasvinī.*
12.146.11d. Text amendment: *Read carase sukhī* as *carase 'sukhī.*
12.147.7c. Text amendment: Read *abhirakṣanti* for *abhinaṅkṣanti.*
12.149.55d. Text amendment: Read *upāsata* for *upāsate.*
12.155.4d. Reading note: I read the printed *tapo mūlam* as *tapomūlam.*
12.159.33b. Text amendment: Read *viprasvaṃ ceti* instead of Belvalkar's emendation, *viprāsaṅgaś ca.*

Appendix 2: List of Characters and Places

This list presents the main characters of the *Mahābhārata* and the names of other characters and places that figure prominently in this volume. The names of the most prominent characters are preceded by a dagger (†). This list also includes the chief alternative names of the main characters. Roman alphabetical order is used, ignoring the distinctions of diacritical marks. All references to the *MBh* (which are generally only to Major Books and chapters—I include verse numbers only when they are particularly important) include the Boṃbay edition in addition to the Pune edition. (Secondary references to the Bombay edition are typically reproduced from the references in van Buitenen's summaries or from the marginal references provided in the Pune edition of the *MBh.* Those who use the Bombay edition or the translations based upon it [basically the Roy-Ganguli translation; M. N. Dutt's rendition seems to be only a lightly reworded version of the Roy-Ganguli work] need to be alert to various small discrepancies in the numbering of chapters.)

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†**Abhimanyu**—Son of Arjuna and Subhadrā, the sister of Kṛṣṇa. He fought valiantly in the war, and his heroic and pathetic death sears the memory of all the *Mahābhārata* that follows its telling, embittering Arjuna and disturbing Yudhiṣṭhira. The boy Abhimanyu, about fifteen years old at the time of the battle, had been taught by his father Arjuna the way of breaking through Droṇa's particularly effective battle array called the "circle." On the thirteenth day of the war, while Arjuna was off fighting on the far southern periphery of the battlefield, Abhimanyu, commissioned by Yudhiṣṭhira (7.34 [B. 7.35]), advanced through the Kaurava lines, but his support from the Pāṇḍavas, who were trying to

follow him in, was cut off as the vigorous Jayadratha reclosed the Kaurava line behind Abhimanyu (7.41 [B. 7.42] and following). Alone, surrounded by the enemy, Abhimanyu inflicted much damage on the Kaurava army and some of its mightiest heroes (e.g., Karṇa), but, finally fighting on foot and shorn of all weapons (he fought with a loose chariot-wheel at one point), he was killed by a blow to the head from the club of "Duḥśāsana's son" (7.48.12–13 [B. 7.49]). "So, king, that one alone was cut down by many in the war" (7.48.13cd; Saṃjaya is speaking to Dhṛtarāṣṭra).

Agni—The ancient Vedic God Fire. With Indra, one of the two most important and frequently addressed and mentioned Gods of the *Ṛg Veda.* In addition to all of this God's obvious uses and benefits for human beings, he was also the "mouth" of the other Gods, he who "digested" and then conveyed the sacrificial offerings up into the atmosphere and sky for the benefit of the other Gods. He is thus the premier God of the brahmin religion of sacrificial worship.

Andhakas—The name of one of the tribes of people descended from Yayāti's son Yadu (as were the Vṛṣṇis, Kṛṣṇa's tribe).

†**Arjuna**—The third "son of Pāṇḍu." Actually conceived by Kuntī (Pṛthā) when, at the urging of her husband, the involuntarily celibate Pāṇḍu, she used a magical formula to conjure Indra to impregnate her with a son. He was the last of Pṛthā's four sons (the first was Karṇa, engendered by Sūrya, the God who is the Sun; see s.v. "Karṇa"). He was generally the most brilliant warrior of his age (though the *MBh* says occasionally that his own son Abhimanyu surpassed him [e.g., *MBh* 7.34.13d; 11.20.1])—the son of Indra, best pupil of Droṇa, accoutered with weapons by Agni, Śiva, and other Gods, boon companion of his cousin Kṛṣṇa (whose sister, Subhadrā, he married, and who served as his chariot-driver during the war). Arjuna was also secretly (i.e., he, like "Kṛṣṇa" Vāsudeva, was also "Kṛṣṇa," that is, "obscure, mysterious, dark, hidden") the human incarnation of an ancient deity Nara, "Man," paired with Kṛṣṇa Vāsudeva's incarnation of Nārāyaṇa, "God." These two Gods are ascetic seers who practice austerities up in the mountains in a hermitage at Badarī, descending to the human realm from time to time as warriors for the Gods.

Aśvatthāman—The son of the brahmin Droṇa, who incarnates combined pieces of Śiva, Death, Lust, and Fury. A fierce warrior in Duryodhana's army, he was one of its three survivors. When Dhṛṣṭadyumna, the son of his father's old enemy, Drupada, beheaded Droṇa wrongfully on the fifteenth day of the battle (see 7.165 [B. 7.192 {193 in Roy}], esp. vss. 27–57), Aśvatthāman was outraged (see 7.165.87 ff. [B. 7.193.26 {Roy 194}]) and swore revenge upon Dhṛṣṭadyumna and his Pāñcāla kinsmen (7.166.28–29 [B. 7.195.16–17, which, with other Northern mss. has Aśvatthāman swear an oath in vs. 15 {Roy 196}]). He

avenged his father's death hideously by killing Dhṛṣṭadyumna and Drupada's grandchildren in their sleep on the night of the eighteenth day of the war, when the war was effectively over. Hunted down by the Pāṇḍavas, he launched a deadly, magically charged arrow (the *brahman*-head missile) that killed the baby in Uttarā's womb, who was, after being revived by Kṛṣṇa, the sole Bhārata descendant in the wake of the war (Parikṣit, father of Janamejaya). Kṛṣṇa cursed Aśvatthāman to wander the earth for three thousand years shrouded in miasma (10.10–16).

Badarī—the ascetic retreat Badrīnāth in the Himālayas; said, at *MBh* 3.45.20 [B. 3.47.13], to be the source of the Gaṅgā River, where Nara and Nārāyaṇa, frequently identified as Arjuna and Kṛṣṇa, respectively, performed asceticism in an earlier time. See *MBh* 3.41.1 ff., 45.18 ff. [B. 3.40.1 ff., 47.10 ff.], and elsewhere, in Book 3 and at various places in the *Nārāyaṇīya* section of Book 12 (e.g., 12.331.19 ff. [B. 12.343.29 ff.]).

Bāhlika—A Kaurava elder, the son of Pratīpa and brother of Śaṃtanu (Bhīṣma's father). Probably the father of Somadatta (see s.v.). Other spellings of the name met with are Bāhlīka, Vahlika, Bālhika, and so forth.

Balarāma—Older brother of Kṛṣṇa Vāsudeva; Rāma's, that is, Balarāma's, complexion is white, and his brother Kṛṣṇa's is dark. He was the incarnation of a portion of the world-bearing serpent Śeṣa (1.61.91). His particular weapon was the plow, his characteristic device was the palmyra palm, and he was known for drunkenness (5.154.18). He refused to participate in the war on either side, out of disgust, and went on a tour of holy bathing shrines (*tīrthas*) instead. He was returning from his pilgrimage just as Bhīma and Duryodhana squared off to fight their club duel. An expert in the art of club fighting, Rāma observed the fight and was outraged by the low blow with which Bhīma defeated Duryodhana. Kṛṣṇa defended Bhīma, but Rāma adamantly condemned him and stormed off to the Vṛṣṇī city of Dvārakā. Thirty-six years after the war, when the drunken feast of the Vṛṣṇis turned into general internecine murder, Rāma did not participate; he had wandered off into the woods and sat down against a tree. He died there, in yoga meditation, as a huge white snake with a thousand heads crawled out of his mouth (16.5.12–13 [B. 16.4]).

Bhāgirathī—A name for the Gaṅgā River based upon the fact that King Bhagīratha persuaded her to come down to earth from heaven to wash the incinerated remains of his sixty thousand ancestors (so they might go to heaven). She agreed to descend if he could persuade Śiva to break her fall. He did so, so she came down, washed over his ancestors, and filled up the ocean; see *MBh* 3.104–8 (B. 3.106–9).

†Bharata, Bhārata—(1) Bharata and Bhārata are alternative forms of the name of the people descended from King Bharata, the founder of a

dynasty within the Paurava lineage (descending from Yayāti's son Pūru) of the kings descended from Ilā, daughter of Manu (see s.v. "Ilā"). The protagonists of *The Great Bhārata* were all descendants of the Kaurava line of Bharatas. (2) Bhārata is an adjective meaning "pertaining to the Bharatas." (3) Bharata was the prodigiously powerful son of Śakuntalā, a young maiden living in a forest hermitage, born as the result of a seduction by the king Duḥṣanta Paurava, who encountered her while hunting. Śakuntalā showed up at court and had to persuade Duḥṣanta of his paternity and insist upon his earlier promise to make any son of their union his heir. Bharata became the eponymous ancestor of the preeminent royal lineage of Northern India depicted in the *MBh.*

Bhārgavas—Descendants of the ancient Vedic seer Bhṛgu. The most prominent of the Bhārgavas in the *MBh* is Rāma, son of Jamadagni. Also very prominent was Śukra, Uśanas son of Kavi, who served the Asuras as a priest and advisor.

†Bhīma, Bhīmasena—The second son of Pāṇḍu and Kuntī (Pṛthā). His actual father was the God Wind (Vāyu), which made him a half-brother of the heroic monkey Hanumān made famous in the *Rāmāyaṇa.* Physically the most powerful of the five Pāṇḍava brothers, he sometimes carried other members of the family when travel was difficult and defended them against various monstrous threats. He was particularly devoted to their common wife Draupadī and was constantly moved by her bitter memory of the insults and mistreatment she suffered in the Kaurava assembly hall at the time of the dicing match. Bhīma vowed to kill all one hundred of the Dhārtarāṣṭras in battle, to drink the blood of Duḥśāsana in particular, as he was the one who had abused Draupadī most outrageously, and to smash the thigh which Duryodhana leeringly exposed to Draupadī. Bhīma made good on all these promises, smashing Duryodhana's thigh with a foul blow of his club during their duel late in the afternoon of the eighteenth day of the war (9.56–59 [B. 9.57–60]).

†Bhīṣma—The son of Śaṃtanu Bhārata by the Goddess the river Gaṅgā (and so known as Gaṅgeya). An incarnation of the Vasu Dyaus, the God Sky, who had been cursed to live a long human life because, unduly attentive to his wife's inappropriate wishes, he had stolen the primordial "Cow of Plenty" from the seer Vasiṣṭha. Bhīṣma swore celibacy to enable his father to marry Satyavatī, who came from the Yamunā River. This sacrifice earned for him the privilege of being able to choose for himself the time of his death (1.94 [B. 1.100]). Always faithful to his vow, he was the nominal "grandfather" of the Pāṇḍavas and Dhārtaraṣṭras, and in spite of his vow he was the most prominent kṣatriya warrior of his age. He single-handedly carried off three princesses of Benares for his brother Vicitravīrya (who later exhausted himself in sex with his wives but died without issue; Bhīṣma was urged to impregnate them by levirate, but he refused because of his vow), but one of them (Ambā)

was secretly betrothed to another king, who then refused to have her when Bhīṣma let her go to him (1.96 [B. 1.102]). Ambā swore vengeance against Bhīṣma and, after violent ascetic observances, was promised such vengeance by Lord Śiva. She entered fire, was born a girl (Śikhaṇḍinī) to the Pāñcāla king Drupada, who claimed she was actually a boy, and eventually miraculously acquired a male body and (as the prince Śikhaṇḍin) became the instrument of Bhīṣma's fall (5.170–97 [B. 173–96]). (Because Śikhaṇḍin had once been a woman, Bhīṣma refused, by the rules of war, to fight against him; so Arjuna felled his "grandfather" Bhīṣma by attacking from behind Śikhaṇḍin, against whom Bhīṣma refused to defend himself. This device, which Bhīṣma himself conceived and told the Pāṇḍavas to employ, was the only way any of the Pāṇḍava warriors was able to harm Bhīṣma seriously (6.103–4 [B. 6.107–8]; 112–14 [B. 6.116–19]). Upon falling in battle on the tenth day of the war, Bhīṣma chose the upcoming winter solstice to be the auspicious moment of his death. For many days he lay on the battlefield upon the hero's bed of arrows. So many arrows protruded from his body that no part of his cooling body touched the ground, and he resembled the fading, setting sun. During this period he instructed Yudhiṣṭhira in the dharmas of kingship and Absolute Freedom.

Bhṛgu—An ancient Vedic seer. In the *MBh* he is said to have been born of Brahmā's heart (1.60.40). He was the eponymous ancestor of the Bhārgavas, a group of brahmin seers (the most important of whom was Rāma, son of Jamadagni [see s.v. "Rāma"], who figure prominently in many of the collateral stories of the *MBh* (see 1.4–11 [B. 1.4–11] in particular).

Bhūriśravas—A prominent Kaurava Bharata warrior, the son of Somadatta Bharata. Noted for his great ritual piety and patronage of brahmin priests, Bhūriśravas had as his particular device the *yūpa* (the stake to which the animal offering for the sacrifice was tied before it was killed). He participated in his father's rivalry against the Vṛṣṇi Śini (see s.v. "Somadatta") and met his death fighting Śini's grandson, Sātyaki. Bhūriśravas had defeated Sātyaki in a ferocious struggle on the fourteenth day of the war, and, reversing what Sātyaki's grandfather had done to his father, Somadatta, Bhūriśravas grabbed the fallen Sātyaki's hair and, with his sword raised over the fallen victim, he kicked him in the chest, the bodily locus of kṣatriya might. (The similarity between the motif of an imminent victim in battle being held by his hair and the fact that the imminent victim of the sacrificial ritual is tethered to the *yūpa* is interesting.) But before he could bring the sword down, Sātyaki's kinsman Kṛṣṇa, who was watching a short way off with Bhūriśravas's kinsman Arjuna, persuaded Arjuna to prevent the death of this Vṛṣṇi, Arjuna's ally and protégé, Sātyaki. Secretly admiring his Kaurava kinsman, Arjuna shot an arrow that lopped off Bhūriśravas's right arm uplifted with his sword (7.117.45–62 [B. 7.142]). After his arm was severed, Bhūriśravas sat down to await death in *prāya* and Sātyaki sprang up and decapitated him—to general disapproval (7.118 [B. 7.143]).

Brahmā—God who (parallel to the late Vedic Prajāpati, "the Progenitor") is the source of the world, usually, in the *MBh*, by producing offspring who engender the world's beings through their pairings (different accounts in 1.59–60 [B. 1.65–66]); particularly productive were thirteen of his granddaughters (born of his son Dakṣa, who himself was born from Brahmā's right thumb) and his grandson Kaśyapa. He is commonly called the Self-Existent One (*svayaṃbhu*), the Grandfather of the universe (*sarvalokapitāmaha*), the Teacher of the Universe (*lokaguru*), and He Who Stands Highest (*parameṣṭhin*). This exalted but benevolent God presides over one of the highest and most desired heavenly worlds, Brahmāloka.

Bṛhaspati—An ancient Vedic seer, the house-priest of the Gods. Famous in the *Ṛg Veda* for assisting Indra in defeating the demon Vala. The second son of Brahmā's son, the seer Aṅgiras (Bṛhaspati's older brother was Utathya and his younger brother was Saṃvarta), and famous in the *MBh* as an authority on dharma and royal administration (*nīti*).

Daiteya—Another name for Daitya.

Daitya—Particular Asuras whose mother was Diti, the sister of Aditi (the mother of the Gods); both were the daughters of Dakṣa and wives of Kaśyapa.

Dānavas—Particular Asuras whose mother was Danu, a daughter of Dakṣa and a wife of Kaśyapa; most notably Vipracitti and Namuci.

Dhanaṃjaya—"Winner of Wealth"; an epithet for Arjuna.

†Dhārtarāṣṭras—The hundred sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra and Gāndhārī: Duryodhana, Duḥśāsana, Durmukha, and so on. They were born grotesquely from a hundred individual pots of ghee (clarified butter) after their mother (who had been promised a hundred sons by the seer Vyāsa) aborted herself when she had been pregnant for two years. Vyāsa divided the dense ball of flesh she produced into one hundred segments and installed them in the jars of ghee, and in time Duryodhana and his wicked brothers were born (1.107 [B. 1.115]).

Dhṛṣṭadyumna—The son of the Pāñcāla king Drupada and brother of Draupadī. Both he and his sister were born of a ritual their father sponsored as he sought a son to counteravenge the brahmin Droṇa's having humiliated him through the Pāṇḍavas (Droṇa had conquered him and then restored to him half his kingdom; 1.128 [B. 1.138]). Dhṛṣṭadyumna was born of the fire of the rite, and his sister was born of the earth that was marked out as the altar of the rite (1.154–55 [B. 1.167–68]). Dhṛṣṭadyumna, the brother-in-law of the Pāṇḍavas, became their military commander (*senāpati*) and served in that capacity

throughout the war. His most famous, or infamous, deed during the war was his decapitation of his father's nemesis Droṇa on the fifteenth day of the war. Droṇa, depressed because Bhīma and Yudhiṣṭhira had (falsely) told him that his son Aśvatthāman had been killed, sat down beside his chariot in *prāya* and composed himself in meditation to await death (7.165 [B. 7.192 {193 in Roy}], esp. vss. 27–57). Along with his brother Śikhaṇḍin and his sister Draupadī's five sons (one with each of the Pāṇḍavas), he met his end ignominiously in the bitter Aśvatthāman's night raid (10.8.5 ff. [B. 10.8]).

Dhṛṣṭaketu—King of the Cedis, who led the Cedis in fighting on the side of the Pāṇḍavas. He was the son of Śiśupāla, whom Kṛṣṇa killed in the dispute over precedence at Yudhiṣṭhira's Royal Consecration. Śiśupāla's mother was a Dāśārha princess, an aunt of Kṛṣṇa's, so the Cedi kings were maternal cousins of Kṛṣṇa, as were the Pāṇḍavas; see *MBh* 2.40 (B. 2.43).

†Dhṛtarāṣṭra—The (nominal) son of Vicitravīrya Bharata (son of Śaṃtanu) and the former princess of Benares Ambikā, husband of Gāndhārī, and father of a hundred wicked sons (Duryodhana, Duḥśāsana, Durmukha, etc.), one daughter, Duḥśalā, and (with a vaiśya woman) Yuyutsu (who fought the war on the Pāṇḍava side). Vicitravīrya had died without issue, so his co-uterine brother, the horribly unkempt seer Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vyāsa, impregnated his wives by the levirate. Ambikā shut her eyes when Vyāsa came in to her; hence, the resulting son, Dhṛtarāṣṭra, was congenitally blind. Dhṛtarāṣṭra was mindful of the Law most of the time, but his affection for his son Duryodhana incapacitated him as a shaper of events. Dissuaded from seeking death in the immediate aftermath of the war, Dhṛtarāṣṭra lived with the Pāṇḍavas in Hāstinapura for fifteen years and was the nominal ruler of the kingdom. Then, with his wife Gāndhārī, his brother's (Pāṇḍu's) widow, Kuntī, his brother Vidura, and his charioteer Sañjaya, he retired to the forest. Later, his actual father, Vyāsa, summoned the dead of the war to a meeting with Dhṛtarāṣṭra and his party at the river Gaṅgā, and Dhṛtarāṣṭra was able to see his sons for the first time. Two years later he and Gāndhārī and Kuntī were caught in a forest fire which they were too weak (because of their harsh ascetic observances) to flee. They composed themselves in meditation and were consumed by the flames.

†Draupadī—Princess of the Pāñcālas and common wife of the five Pāṇḍavas. She was born from the earth that was marked out as the altar for a sacrificial rite sponsored by her father as he sought a son to counteravenge the brahmin Droṇa's having humiliated him through the Pāṇḍavas (1.128 [B. 1.138]; a son was produced by this rite, Draupadī's brother Dhṛṣṭadyumna, who emerged from the fire). At her public "choosing of a husband" (*svayaṃvara*) a challenge was posed to all suitors in the form of a bow almost impossible to bend; the successful suitor would have to string the bow and then hit a golden target mounted on an aerial device (1.176 [B. 1.185]). The Pāṇḍavas were present at the festival, disguised as brahmins, and Arjuna easily met the challenge after all the kṣatriyas present were unable to bend the bow and string it. Draupadī inadvertently became the wife of all five Pāṇḍavas when their mother Kuntī unwittingly told them to share their day's find (1.182 [B. 1.191]). Wagered and lost by Yudhiṣṭhira at the dicing match, Draupadī was dragged by her hair from the women's quarters into the midst of the game in the assembly hall, though she was clad only in the single garment women typically wore in the privacy of the harem, and though she was also in the taboo period of menstruation. Demanding to know if Yudhiṣṭhira could rightly wager her when he had already wagered and lost himself, she was insulted by the Kauravas as now being their slave, and Duḥśāsana tried to pull her garment off her, but it was miraculously replaced. He tried again and again, but it was replaced again and again (2.61 [B. 2.68]). Her husbands, bound by the agreements of the match, no longer masters of themselves, suffered the abuse of their wife with downcast faces, though Bhīmasena was restrained with difficulty, and at one point fire and smoke spurted from the openings of his body (2.64 [B. 2.72]). She accompanied the Pāṇḍavas during the thirteen-year "exile" which resolved the crisis of the dice match, serving as a hair-dressing maid of the Matsya queen during the year of incognito. She regularly harangued Yudhiṣṭhira for not taking better care of her and his other dependents, and she encouraged Bhīma's special protectiveness of her, but she was most partial to Arjuna. Bothered by the Matsya general Kīcaka, she lured him to a horrible death at Bhīma's hands. She had one son by each of the Pāṇḍavas, but all five of them died at the conclusion of the war in Aśvatthāman's grotesque night raid as he avenged his father against Dhṛṣṭadyumna and all the offspring of Drupada (see s.v. "Aśvatthāman"). She made the final trek toward heaven with the Pāṇḍavas, falling dead first after they circumambulated the entire land, crossed the Himālayas, and were in sight of Mount Meru.

Droṇa—A brahmin who was a great warrior and the military teacher of the entire Bhārata household (including the Pāṇḍavas and Dhārtarāṣṭras and several others, such as Karṇa and the Vṛṣṇī Sātyaki). Droṇa, already knowledgeable of weapons, went to the Bhārgava brahmin Rāma to ask for riches but instead acquired from this ferocious and effective scourge of kṣatriyas his entire store of weapons and the secrets and formulas for using them. Droṇa's boyhood friend Drupada had rebuffed him haughtily when they were grown, and Droṇa avenged the insult, taking Drupada's kingdom and then returning half to him with the help of his, Droṇa's, best pupils, the Pāṇḍavas. Though Droṇa

personally favored the cause of the Pāṇḍavas, he was bound to fight with the reigning Bhārata king (6.41 [B. 6.43]), and he served as the second commander-in-chief of the Kaurava army after Bhīṣma's fall. On the fifteenth day of the war, deceived by Bhīma and Yudhiṣṭhira into thinking that his son Aśvatthāman had been killed in the war (7.164.66–74 [B.190.9–18 {191 in Roy}] and 7.164.97–110 [B. 7.190.45 ff. {191 in Roy}]), Droṇa resolved upon death and sat down beside his chariot in *prāya*. Dhṛṣṭadyumna, the son of his lifelong enemy, Drupada, then charged up and decapitated him (7.165 [B. 7.192 {193 in Roy}]). Droṇa's body was cremated by brahmins when the hostilities ceased (11.23 [B. 11.23]).

Drupada—King of the Pāñcālas, avowed enemy of Droṇa, father of Draupadī and Dhṛṣṭadyumna, and father-in-law and ally of the Pāṇḍavas.

Duḥśāsana—Second son of Dhṛtarāṣṭra and Gāndhārī; see s.v. "Dhārtarāṣṭras." The most consistently malicious of Duryodhana's brothers, it was he who dragged Draupadī from the harem into the midst of the men gambling with the dice in the assembly hall, and it was he who tried to strip Draupadī naked there (2.61 [B. 2.68]). Bhīmasena swore at the time that he would kill Duḥśāsana and drink his blood, and he did so on the penultimate day (the seventeenth) of the war (8.61. [B. 8.83]).

Duḥśalā—The one and only daughter of Dhṛtarāṣṭra and Gāndhārī. She married Jayadratha, King of Sindhu.

†Duryodhana—The firstborn of the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra and Gāndhārī (see s.v. "Dhārtarāṣṭras"). Born of a portion of the demon Strife, Kali (1.61.80 [B. 1.67]; not to be confused with the Goddess Kālī), "a man of poor understanding and faulty judgment who disgraced the Kurus. He was a man of dissension detested by the whole world. The most vile of men, he fanned a feud into a great blaze that put an end to creatures and destroyed the entire earth" (1.61.80cd–81ef [B. 67]). Innately selfish and jealous, driven by resentment and envy of the Pāṇḍavas, Duryodhana went out of his way to antagonize the Pāṇḍavas at every turn (deeply insulting Draupadī in the dicing match) until and even after they were "exiled" from their kingdom for thirteen years. At the end of the agreed period of absence, he refused to allow the Pāṇḍavas to reoccupy their kingdom, forcing the war. After Śakuni was killed and his army was completely broken on the eighteenth day of the war, Duryodhana fled the battlefield and hid himself in a lake, magically stiffening its waters (9.28 [B. 9.29]). The Pāṇḍavas discovered him there and coaxed him out of the water to fight any one of them alone and possibly retain the kingdom (9.31 [B. 9.32]). Duryodhana fought Bhīmasena in a duel with clubs. Kṛṣṇa suggested to Arjuna that Bhīma needed to fight unfairly in order to win, and Arjuna signaled Bhīma, patting his thigh (9.57 [B. 9.58]). Bhīma hurled his club at Duryodhana's thigh and smashed it, fulfilling the promise he had made when Duryodhana exposed his thigh to Draupadī during the dicing match. Bhīma then nudged Duryodhana's head with his left foot, outraging everyone who witnessed it. Balarāma, an expert in club fighting, condemned Bhīma's deed and stormed off in disgust. After a moving speech excoriating Kṛṣṇa's conduct in the war, Duryodhana was showered with flowers from the sky. After the Pāṇḍavas left him Duryodhana still hoped for vengeance against them, and he consecrated Aśvatthāman as the new commander-in-chief of his remaining force: Aśvatthāman, Kṛtavarman, and Kṛpa (9.64 [B. 9.65]). They then slaughtered those sleeping in the Pāṇḍava camp that night (Kṛṣṇa had instructed the Pāṇḍavas to sleep some distance away from the camp that night), returned to Duryodhana, informed him of what they had done, and Duryodhana then died (10.9 [B. 10.9]).

†Dvaipāyana—"Island Born"; epithet for Vyāsa.

Dvaita, Dvaitavana—One of the forest areas in which the Pāṇḍavas dwelled during their twelve-year sojourn in the forest; the other was the Kāmyaka.

Dvārakā—The city by Mount Raivata and the western sea to which the Mādhavas, the Yādavas, fled to escape the oppression of Jarāsaṃdha of Magadha. The capital city of the Yādava Vṛṣṇis in the west.

Gāṅgeya—Bhīṣma, the "son of the river Gaṅgā."

†Gāndhārī—The princess of Gāndhāra, daughter of king Subala, sister of Śakuni, wife of Dhṛtarāṣṭra, and mother of the hundred Dhārtarāṣṭras (*q.v.* for a description of their strange birth). Before marrying the congenitally blind Dhṛtarāṣṭra, she vowed to wear a blindfold her entire life, so she would not be superior to her husband. This deed of asceticism charged her with great power, and after the war, with some mediation from Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vyāsa, she had the power to see all parts of the battlefield while still blindfolded and standing in one spot. She used this power to describe many of the dead heroes (beginning with her own sons) and the lamentations of their wives, sisters, and daughters. Reconciled with the Pāṇḍavas, she lived with her husband in Hāstinapura for fifteen years after the war. She then accompanied her husband to the forest and died beside him (and Kuntī) in a forest fire three years later (see s.v. "Dhṛtarāṣṭra").

Gaṅgā—The Goddess who is the Gaṅgā River, the eastern and northern of the two major rivers that define the Doab, the Mesopotamia of north central India. She descended to the earth in answer to the pleas of King Bhagīratha (see s.v. "Bhāgīrathī"), her fall from heaven being broken by Śiva's brow as he sat on Mount Kailāsa. Her main part in the *MBh* narrative is as the first wife of the Bharata King Śaṃtanu and mother of his son Bhīṣma.

Ghaṭotkaca—The son of Bhīmasena and the Rākṣasī monster Hiḍimbā. He had all the preternatural powers of the Rākṣasas but was kindly

disposed to the Pāṇḍavas, coming to them when mentally summoned. Like those of all Rākṣasas, Ghaṭotkaca's powers were greatest in the darkness, and Kṛṣṇa manipulated him to attack Karṇa in the night battle of the fourteenth day of the war in order to provoke Karṇa to discharge his one infallible weapon (7.148.31 ff. [B. 7.173]). Karṇa killed Ghaṭotkaca with that weapon (7.154.45 ff. [B. 7.179]), thus insuring that Arjuna would no longer need fear it (7.155–57 [B. 7.180–82]).

Govinda—"Cowherd"; a frequently used name of Kṛṣṇa Vāsudeva.

Hāstinapura—"The City of the Elephant"; the capital city of the Kaurava Bharatas on the Gaṅgā river.

Hṛṣīkeśa—Another name of Kṛṣṇa.

Iḍā—See s.v. "Ilā."

Ikṣvāku—Offspring of Manu (see s.v. "Manu") and the founder of the "solar dynasty" of kings at Ayodhyā. According to *MBh* 1.70 [B. 1.75], he was the fifth son of Manu Vaivasvata (see Chart 1 in Appendix 3).

Ilā—The daughter of Manu (see s.v. "Manu") and the founder of the "lunar dynasty" of kings, which included Yayāti's descendants, the Pauravas, which in turn included the Yādavas and the Bhāratas, which latter included the Kauravas, the family of the *Mahābhārata*'s protagonists. According to *MBh* 1.70 [B. 1.75], Ilā was the eighth child of Manu Vaivasvata (see Appendix 3, Chart 1). Ilā was praised in the *RV* (where she was known as Iḍā) as the Goddess of piously made libations of milk and butter poured to refresh the Gods and ancestors. The *ŚB* recounts her birth from Manu in the aftermath of the great flood (see *ŚB* 1.8.1.7 ff.). The *MBh* tradition expresses some confusion over Ilā's sex (1.70.16cd says, "'Ilā was the mother of [Purūravas] and also his father,' so we have heard") and also suggests that she becomes the male King Sudyumna; see *MBh* 13, Appendix 1, no. 16, l. 49 (B. 13.147.26cd); see also *MBh* 13, Appendix 1, no. 14B, ll. 38–39 (B. 13.137.19). Later Purāṇic traditions record more extensively the theme of sexual transformations and retransformations between the female Ilā and the male Sudyumna (see Mani, *Purāṇic Encyclopaedia*, s.v. "SudyumnaII" and Ilā).

†Indra—Before the *MBh*, in the *Vedas:* With Agni, the God of Fire, one of the two most important and frequently addressed and mentioned Gods of the *Ṛg Veda.* He was the thunderbolt-wielding God of the monsoon rainstorm, the leader of the Maruts, the storm winds; slayer of the mythic demon Vṛtra (who, in the shape of a dragon, confined the waters of life), thus freeing the waters of life (the monsoon rains); boisterous leader of the Aryans' war-parties; great drinker of the "uplifting" Soma juice. In the *MBh:* Indra has become "king" of the Gods and lord of one of the highest heavens, Tridiva or Triviṣṭapa. He is the father of Arjuna Pāṇḍava.

Indraprastha—"Indra's Station"; the city that the Pāṇḍavas founded in the Khāṇḍava Tract along the Yamunā river when they and the Kauravas divided the kingdom; the capital city of the Pāṇḍavas before their forced sojourn in the forest.

Janamejaya—Second Bharata dynast in the age after the war. The son of Parikṣit. When his father was killed by the bite of the snake Takṣaka, Janamejaya tried to destroy all the world's snakes with a Snake Sacrifice. The sacrifice was halted by the hybrid snake Āstīka before all the snakes were destroyed. Vyāsa attended this sacrifice, and his *MBh* was recited to Janamejaya by Vyāsa's pupil Vaiśaṃpāyana.

Jayadratha—The king of the Sindhus in the northwest. He married Duḥśalā, the one daughter of Dhṛtarāṣṭra and Gāndhārī. Son of a man called Vṛddhakṣatra, "he in whom the *kṣatra* was full (or mature, or old)," Jayadratha represents the fullness of kṣatriya irascibility and the kṣatriya propensity toward violence. During the Pāṇḍavas' sojourn in the forest Jayadratha grabbed Draupadī and tried to carry her off. And it was he who, on the thirteenth day of the war, was able (aided by a boon from Śiva, 3.256 [B. 3.272]) to close the Kaurava ranks behind Abhimanyu, single-handedly barring four of the Pāṇḍavas (Arjuna was engaged elsewhere) from following the boy through the breach he had opened (7.41–42 [B. 7.42–43]). For Jayadratha's role in Abhimanyu's death, Arjuna vowed that evening to kill Jayadratha before the setting of the sun on the fourteenth day, no matter who might protect him (7.51.20 ff. [B. 7.73]). This he did late in the afternoon of the fourteenth day, shortly after helping Sātyaki kill Bhūriśravas. Arjuna decapitated Jayadratha and made his head fly off to nearby Samantapañcaka (where Rāma Jāmadagnya had made five lakes with kṣatriya blood). At Samantapañcaka it landed in the lap of Jayadratha's father, Vṛddhakṣatra, who was engaged in ascetic observances there, and who had once (in response to a prophecy) pronounced the curse that anyone who might make his son's head touch the ground would suffer his own head exploding. His son's head landed in his lap while he was saying his twilight recitations, but he did not notice that that had happened. When he concluded his prayers and stood up, his son's head fell to the ground, and Vṛddhakṣatra's own head exploded (7.121 [B. 7.146]).

Kali—The putative demon of dissension or dissolution; the last and worst of the four Ages (*yugas*) in a cycle of four Ages is named the Kaliyuga.

†Karṇa—The firstborn son of Kuntī; his father was the God who is the Sun (Sūrya). He was conceived inadvertently. Kuntī had been given a spell that would summon any God; not quite knowing its power, she summoned Sūrya, who would then not leave without fulfilling the condition of his coming; he impregnated her and restored her virginity. The boy was born with innate golden earrings and armor that formed part of his body, and he shone as brilliantly as his father. His mother set

him afloat on the Aśva river that flowed into the Yamunā and then the Gaṅgā. He was fished out of the Gaṅgā at the eastern city of Campā (in Aṅga, modern Bengal) and adopted by a charioteer, Adhiratha, and his wife Rādhā, who gave him the name Vasuṣeṇa (1.104.15 [B. 1.111.24]), though he was frequently called by the matronymic Rādheya. He grew up to be a powerful young man and was sent to the court at Hāstinapura, becoming a pupil of Droṇa, a strong and loyal ally of Duryodhana, and a bitter rival of Arjuna (3.287–93 [B. 3.303–9]). Like his teacher Droṇa, he went to the Bhārgava brahmin Rāma to acquire the *brahman* weapon which Droṇa refused to teach him because he was not a brahmin. Rāma too would accept only brahmin pupils, so Karṇa lied and told Rāma that he was a brahmin (12.3 [B. 12.3]). His lie was later discovered, and Rāma cursed him to forget the formulas to create that weapon just when he would need it. Duryodhana installed Karṇa as king of the Aṅgas (1.126 [B. 1.136]). During the dicing match Karṇa insulted Draupadī as Duryodhana and Duḥśāsana humiliated her in the assembly hall, and he and Arjuna became absolutely destined for a mortal encounter. To protect his son, Indra disguised himself as a brahmin and went to beg of Karṇa his golden armor and earrings (3.284–86, 294 [B. 3.300–302, 310]). The latter agreed to make Indra a gift without realizing Indra's identity or intention. When Indra made his complete wish known Karṇa resisted and demanded a boon in return. A deal was struck, and Karṇa cut off his innate armor and earrings (depriving him of invincibility) in exchange for a spear which would kill one victim without fail (3.294 [B. 3.310]). His cutting off (an act of *vikartaṇa*) of his innate armor and earrings is said to be the source of his names Vaikartana Karṇa (see 3.294.38 [B. 3.310.38]). Before the great war began Kṛṣṇa (5.138–41 [B. 5.140–43]) and Kuntī (5.143–44 [B. 5.145–46]) tried to persuade her firstborn to join the Pāṇḍavas, but he refused to abandon his friend Duryodhana. Karṇa sat out the first ten days of the war (he had sworn not to fight while Bhīṣma fought, for Bhīṣma once ridiculed Karṇa publicly (5.48 [B. 5.49] and 5.61 [B. 5.62]), and came into the battle after Bhīṣma's fall. In the night after the fourteenth day of the war, during the one night battle of the war, Kṛṣṇa set Bhīmasena's Rākṣasa son Ghaṭotkaca against Karṇa, in order to force Karṇa to use his unfailing weapon. Because Rākṣasas' powers reach their apogee in the night, Kṛṣṇa's plan worked, and Karṇa was forced to use his special spear. After Droṇa's death on the fifteenth day, Karṇa was made the commander-in-chief of the Kaurava forces. On the seventeenth day of the war Śalya, king of the Madras, maternal uncle of Nakula and Sahadeva Pāṇḍavas (who had inadvertently obligated himself to fight on the side of Duryodhana and then had made a deal with Yudhiṣṭhira to demoralize Karṇa during the war [5.8 {B. 8}]), became Karṇa's charioteer (8.22–23, 25–26 [B. 30–31, 35–36]) and began berating and discouraging him (8.26–30 [B. 36–45]). Late on the seventeenth day of the battle Karṇa and Arjuna met and, at Kṛṣṇa's behest, Arjuna decapitated Karṇa when he was off his chariot, struggling, with his back to Arjuna, to free his chariot from a mire of mud (8.66–67 [B. 8.90–91]).

Kaśyapa—An ancient seer of the Veda and one of the "Progenitors" (Prajāpatis), that is, one of the fathers of the world's creatures. He was the son of Marīci and grandson of Brahmā, and he married thirteen of the daughters of Dakṣa, another Progenitor who was also a grandson of Brahmā. By his thirteen wives, he was, according to *MBh* 1.59–60, 70, and 93 (B. 1.65–66, 75, and 99), the direct father of many of the Gods, the demons, cows, and all the different animals, as well as Vivasvat (from Vivasvat there derived in succession Yama [the God of Death], the Sun, Manu, and humankind). Two important myths portray Kaśyapa as inappropriately being given custody of the earth. (1) At *MBh* 3.114.17–23 (B. 3.114.17–24), when he is on the northern bank of the Vaitaraṇī River in Kaliṅga, near the ocean shore in eastern India, Yudhiṣṭhira is told (in a narrative that has variant versions in the *Aitareya* and *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇas;* see *MBh* 12.8.34 ff. [B. 12.8.34ff.] and 12.20.12 [B. 12.20.12], and accompanying notes, which concern the "Sacrifice of All Things"; this rite is mentioned also at 12.12.26 [B. 12.12.27] and 12.25.7 [12.24.7]) that the "majestic Viśvakarman" gave the entire Earth to Kaśyapa as his priest-present at the conclusion of a sacrifice, that the Earth was very distressed at his giving her to a mortal and sank below the waters to the underworld, and that Kaśyapa then coaxed her back up in the form of an altar. (2) The previous history was related to Yudhiṣṭhira immediately prior to his being told the story of the Bhārgava Rāma's protracted vendetta against kṣatriyas (3.115–17 [B. 3.115–17]). After slaughtering twenty-one successive generations of kṣatriyas (new generations were born as brahmin men were called in to make the kṣatriya widows fruitful), Rāma's grandfather Ṛcīka stopped him, and Rāma then offered sacrificial worship to Indra, gave the Earth to the brahmins, along with a gigantic golden altar (a representation of the earth [e.g., see 3.114.23], which Kaśyapa allowed the brahmins to divide into portions). Another version of the second story that is told at 12.49 (B. 12.49) adds the point about the Earth's distress at not having a proper king (12.49.60 ff. [B. 12.49.68 ff.]). Kaśyapa does his best to succor the Earth and eventually accedes to her request to reinstall as kings remnants of the kṣatriyas whom the Earth had managed to shield from Rāma.

Kaurava—Any descendant of King Kuru Bharata. The name thus applies to the Pāṇḍavas, but primarily is used to refer to the Dhārtarāṣṭra branch of the line based in Hāstinapura.

Kekayas—A people whose five brother-kings all fought with the Pāṇḍavas, while the rest of the group fought for Duryodhana

Keśava—A name of Kṛṣṇa.

Kīcaka—The commander-in-chief of the army of King Virāṭa of the Matsyas (Virāṭa was the unwitting host of the Pāṇḍavas during their year of incognito). Kīcaka took a fancy to Draupadī, who was disguised for the year as the personal hair-dresser of Virāṭa's queen (who was also Kīcaka's sister). Kīcaka began hounding Draupadī and eventually laid his hands upon her. He was mauled by Bhīmasena, whom Draupadī enlisted to assist her. Bhīma then saved Draupadī from Kīcaka's kin, who wish to burn Draupadī with him. See *MBh* 4.13–23 [B.14–24], van Buitenen, 3: 44–63.

Kṛpa—Son of the seer Śaradvat Gautama, born in a clump of reeds when his father ejaculated involuntarily. He and his twin sister were adopted by King Śaṃtanu Bharata, and Kṛpa became a teacher of the arts of war in the Bhārata court. He was later superseded by Droṇa in that capacity. Kṛpa was one of the major warriors in Duryodhana's army and one of the three survivors of that slaughtered army. He was Aśvatthāman's maternal uncle, and he participated with Kṛtavarman in Aśvatthāman's night raid, but that was not held against him later by the Pāṇḍavas (see 12.45.8 [B. 12.45.8]); he lived with them in Hāstinapura until they departed on the Great Journey, when he became the teacher of the new king, Parikṣit.

Kṛpī—Sister of Kṛpa, she becomes the wife of Droṇa and mother of Aśvatthāman.

†**Kṛṣṇa Vāsudeva**—The dark-skinned (the word *kṛṣṇa* means "black, dark"), mysterious (*kṛṣṇa* in the sense of "obscure, hidden") son of the Vṛṣṇi Vasudeva, prince of the Vṛṣṇis (a tribe of the Yādavas, the descendants of Yayāti's son Yadu), and the incarnation of the supreme God Viṣṇu. Viṣṇu took birth upon the earth in order to relieve the earth of the burden of demons who had overrun her (Earth) in the aftermath of the last defeat of the demons by the Gods. Kṛṣṇa was tightly related to the Pāṇḍavas and to Arjuna in particular. His father's sister was Kuntī, who became Pāṇḍu's wife and the mother of Yudhiṣṭhira, Bhīmasena, and Arjuna; furthermore, Kṛṣṇa's sister Subhadrā became Arjuna's second wife. Kṛṣṇa was also a manifestation of the God Nārāyaṇa (sometimes represented in the *MBh* as identical to Viṣṇu) alongside Arjuna's manifestation of the God Nara. Ordinarily these two Gods dwelt in a Himālayan hermitage at Badarī, where they performed ascetic vows in a golden chariot, descending to the human realm from time to time as warriors for the Gods. (This theme is alluded to in the *MBh* when they are referred to as the "two Kṛṣṇas," "the two secret ones.") Kṛṣṇa's participation in events before the great war was one of alternating presence and absence, and during the war he served as Arjuna's noncombatant charioteer. Kṛṣṇa always possessed a deep and extensive awareness of the history, the motives, and the abilities of the various participants in the war, and he periodically exhibited an impatience to see a Pāṇḍava victory. More than once he managed the course of events, and several times he advised Arjuna and the other Pāṇḍavas to violate normal ethical restraints in the interests of expediency (the famous *jihmopāyas,* "crooked tactics"). He played the critical role in persuading Yudhiṣṭhira to accept the Bhārata kingship after the war, and he prompted and witnessed Bhīṣma's long instruction of Yudhiṣṭhira in the Laws for Kings, the Laws for Gaining Absolute Freedom, and the Laws for Giving Gifts. He then withdrew to the Vṛṣṇi city of Dvārakā, returning to Hāstinapura to revive the stillborn Bhārata dynast, his grandnephew Parikṣit, and then to participate in Yudhiṣṭhira's Horse Sacrifice. Thirty-six years after the war his tribe fell into a drunken orgy of internecine murder in which Kṛṣṇa himself killed many of his kinsmen. With virtually all of his kinsmen dead Kṛṣṇa then witnessed the nonviolent demise of his brother Balarāma and was himself killed when a hunter's arrow pierced his foot by mistake.

†**Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vyāsa**—"The Dark, Island-Born Seer, Divider, or Diffuser, of the Veda," a seer who was biologically related to many of the participants in the great war and who reputedly composed the *MBh.*

Kṛtavarman—Vṛṣṇi prince, son of Hṛdīka, one of the seven "great warriors" of the Vṛṣṇis; he fought for Duryodhana in the war and was one of the main warriors on his side. One of the three survivors of the war (with Aśvatthāman and Kṛpa), he participated with them in the slaughter of the night raid (see s.v. "Aśvatthāman"). Mutual vilification between Sātyaki and Kṛtavarman (over the former's killing of Bhūriśravas and the latter's participation in Aśvatthāman's night raid) during a drunken feast thirty-six years after the war led to the internecine strife that finished off the Yādava Vṛṣṇis after Sātyaki decapitated Kṛtavarman (16.4 [B. 16.3]).

†**Kuntī**—Another, very frequently used, name of Pṛthā.

†**Kuru**—One of the descendants of Bharata who also became an eponymous ancestor of an important branch of the Bhārata tribe; he seems to have lived just a few generations before the immediate parents of Dhṛtarāṣṭra and Pāṇḍu. All who descended from Kuru were called Kauravas.

Kurukṣetra—"The Field of King Kuru Bharata." "Between Tarantuka and Arantuka and the lakes of Rāma and Macakruka is the Field of Kuru and Samantapañcaka, which is called God's (Brahmā's, the Grandfather's, Prajāpati's [the Progenitor's]) northern altar" (3.81.177–78 [B. 3.83]; 3.129.22 [B. 3.129]; 9.52.1, 20 [B. 9.53]; another altar of Prajāpati near the confluence of the Gaṅgā and the Yamunā is mentioned at 3.93.7 [B. 3.95]). Tarantuka, Arantuka, and Macakruka are bathing shrines with resident Yakṣas who are "gatekeepers" of Kurukṣetra. The lakes of Rāma are the five lakes of blood created by the Bhārgava Rāma, son of Jamadagni, in his repeated slaughters of the world's kṣatriyas.

King Kuru is said to have "tilled this field" as a place for men (ascetics and warriors) to die free of evil and assured of gaining the realms of the blessed, and Indra, after first being amused, concurred (9.52 [B. 9.53]).

Lakṣmaṇa—The son of Duryodhana.

Mādhava—"One of the Madhus," that is, the Vṛṣṇis. A common epithet for Kṛṣṇa; occasionally used for Balarāma.

Madhusūdana—"Slayer of the Dānava demon Madhu," an epithet for Kṛṣṇa, because of Viṣṇu's having slain the Dānava Madhu (see 3.194 [B. 203]).

Mādrī—Princess of the Madras, a people in the Northwest who fought on Duryodhana's side in the war. Her brother Śalya is infamous in the *MBh* as a traitor. She was purchased by Bhīṣma as Pāṇḍu's second wife, and she became the mother, by the twin Vedic Gods the Aśvins, of the Pāṇḍava twins Nakula and Sahadeva. Her husband was overcome with lust and died in her embrace (see s.v. "Pāṇḍu" for explanation), and she ascended his funeral pyre, leaving her two boys under the protection of Kuntī (1.116 [B. 1.125]).

Mahādeva—"The Great God," Śiva. Occasionally described as God Supreme in the *MBh*, this God basically stands on the periphery of the epic's events. He resides outside of ordered, settled society and plays a role when some person goes or is driven outside of normal procedure. Thus Jayadratha, intensely humiliated in his attempt to carry off Draupadī, solicited Śiva and was given the boon that he would be able to stand against all the Pāṇḍavas except Arjuna. And when Ambā, princess of the Kāśis—wronged by Bhīṣma and then spurned by Śālva, then disappointed by Rāma Jāmadagnya's inability to kill Bhīṣma in a duel—resorted to asceticism along the Yamunā to gain the power to kill Bhīṣma herself, the local ascetics tried to halt her, Bhīṣma's mother Gaṅgā cursed her, and finally Śiva came and granted her wish—she would become a man and kill Bhīṣma in battle (see s.v. "Śikhaṇḍin"). When the Pāṇḍavas began their forest sojourn, Yudhiṣṭhira sent Arjuna off by himself to procure divine weapons. Before Arjuna could succeed in this, he had to see Śiva, be tested by him, and acquire the Pāśupata weapon from him. Aśvatthāman is said to have been produced from bits of "Mahādeva, Death, Lust, and Fury" (1.61.66–67 [B. 1.67]), and Droṇa's son replicated Śiva's traits of marginality and isolation. Aśvatthāman worshipped Śiva as he began his grotesque night raid on the sleeping Pāṇḍava camp, and in return Śiva gave Aśvatthāman a sword and infused his own energy into him.

Mahendra Mountain—The mountain in eastern India where Rāma Jāmadagnya resides after concluding his vendetta against kṣatriyas. Said to be in Kaliṅga, near where the Vaitaraṇī River empties into the Bay of Bengal (3.114, esp. stanza 26 [B. 3.114]).

Māndhātar—One of the prominent legendary kings of the past in the eyes of the *MBh*'s authors. Through the intervention of a Bhārgava seer, he was born to the illustrious but childless king Yuvanāśva in the solar lineage of Īkṣvāku. But through a mishap his gestation occurred within Yuvanāśva himself; he was born through his father's side, and Indra came and gave the baby his own finger to suck (Indra said to him, "*Māṃ dhātā* [He will suckle me]"; hence the boy's name). Māndhātar was a mighty warrior, a great world-conqueror, a *cakravartin*, and worshipper of the Gods with many sacrifices (3.126 [B. 1.126]; 12.29.74–85 [B. 12.29]).

Manu—The name in the *RV* of the first man, the first sacrificer, and the first earthly ruler. In later cosmogonic traditions the appearance and actions of Manu are recorded differently, and by the time of the *MBh* different Manu progenitors are distinguished from each other. Most important in the *MBh* is the Manu descended from Vivasvat (Vivasvat was the son of Kaśyapa and Aditi, and the great grandson of Brahmā; see Appendix 3, Chart 1), the progenitor of humankind in *Mahābhārata* times. Also important in the *MBh* is Manu Svāyaṃbhuva, Manu born directly from Svayaṃbhū (the Self-Existent One). The relatively late *Nārāyaṇīya* section of the *MBh* (12.321–39 [B. 12.334–51]) presents the theory that the Eons (*kalpa-s*, each a "day of Brahmā") are subdivided not only into a thousand Ages (*yugas*, i.e., *mahāyugas*, each consisting of four progressively shorter subordinate *yugas*), but also, in a parallel reckoning, into several (eventually, in the *Harivaṃśa*, fourteen) "Intervals," each presided over by a different Manu (*manvantara-s*). The first Manu in the *kalpa* is Manu Svāyaṃbhuva, and Manu Vaivasvata (the current Manu) now presides over the seventh such interval. According to the *Nārāyaṇīya* (12.322.26–48 [B. 12.335.27–51]), Manu Svāyaṃbhuva composed a large treatise on dharma, and Manu Svāyaṃbhuva is quoted by name numerous times throughout the *MBh* as a great authority. The *Nārāyaṇīya's* account is evidently an account of the origin of the *Manusmṛti* (the *Mānavadharmaśāstra*, the anuṣṭubh śloka text in twelve chapters known popularly as the *Laws of Manu*). In the first chapter of the *Manusmṛti* the account of Manu Svāyaṃbhuva's origin and the history of the text is broadly similar to the *Nārāyaṇīya*'s, though different in setting and details (see Manu 1.32 ff. and 1.58–59), and it too presents the theory of the "Manu-Intervals" (see Manu 1.61 ff.).

Matsya—The name of a people and a kingdom to the southwest of the Bhārata kingdom. During the time of the war their king was Virāṭa. The Bhāratas spent their year of incognito in disguise in Virāṭa's capital and then set up their base in the town of Upaplavya in his kingdom. The Sanskrit word *matsya* means "fish," and the kingdom seems to have been founded, in myth, by a boy born of a fish in the Yamunā river who had swallowed the seed of King Vasu of the kingdom of Cedi. (Vasu possessed and used a sky-going chariot given to him by his friend, Indra, the king of the Gods.) The same pregnancy produced Satyavatī,

who became the second wife of Śaṃtanu Bhārata. The boy became a pious king called "Matsya," likely understood to be Virāṭa's father (1.57 [B. 1.63]).

†**Nahuṣa**—Ancient and famous king descended from Ilā, daughter of Manu; Nahuṣa was the son of Āyus and the father of Yayāti. Nahuṣa was originally a mighty king who was wise and ruled by the Law. He was later invited by the Gods to sit on the throne of Indra when that God was absent for some time, and Nahuṣa was corrupted by his success and power. He insulted the brahmins (is said to have taxed them and forced them to carry his palanquin), eventually touching the august brahmin Agastya with his foot. This tremendous insult occasioned Nahuṣa's loss of Royal Splendor (Śrī), and Agastya cursed him to be born as a boa constrictor (5.11–17 [B. 5.11–17]). He was born a snake, and Bhīmasena was captured by him in the vicinity of Lake Dvaita during the twelfth year of the Pāṇḍavas' extended absence from their kingdom. Nahuṣa would be released from his curse if someone answered his questions about the nature of brahmins, and Yudhiṣṭhira did, receiving in return instructions on ethics (3.175–78 [B. 3.178–81]).

†**Nakula**—The fourth of the sons of Pāṇḍu, the first of the twins fathered by the twin Vedic Gods, the Aśvins, upon Pāṇḍu's second wife, Mādrī. Like the other twin, Sahadeva, Nakula chiefly stays in the background behind the three sons of Kuntī.

†**Nārada**—A divine seer who visited the Pāṇḍavas from time to time and gave them prudent advice based upon a vast store of knowledge acquired by his many wanderings through the three worlds.

Nārāyaṇa—Ascetic warrior God, frequently forming a pair with the God Nara. Nārāyaṇa is, in some parts of the *MBh*, regarded as identical with Viṣṇu. Ordinarily these two Gods dwelt in a Himālayan hermitage at Badarī, where they performed ascetic vows in a golden chariot. They descended to the human realm from time to time as warriors for the Gods. This theme is alluded to in the *MBh* when they are referred to as the "two Kṛṣṇas," "the two secret ones."

Oghavatī—A river running through Kurukṣetra, said once to be one of seven manifestations of the Sarasvatī summoned there by Vasiṣṭha, who was conducting a sacrifice for King Kuru. Kṛṣṇa directed the Pāṇḍavas to camp along the Oghavatī on the eighteenth night of the war, the night of Aśvatthāman's raid upon their main camp. Also, Bhīṣma lay upon his bed of arrows near the Oghavatī.

†**Pāñcāla, Pāñcālya**—Name of the country and the people to the Southeast of the Kurus, along the Gaṅgā River. Prime rivals of the Kurus, the Pāñcālas fought with the Pāṇḍavas in the great war under the leadership of King Drupada. Drupada's daughter, Kṛṣṇā Draupadī, was the wife of the five Pāṇḍavas, and his son Dhṛṣṭadyumna was their military commander. Also known as Sṛñjayas and Somakas.

Pāñcālī—Princess of the Pāñcālas, Draupadī.

†**Pāṇḍava**—Descendant of Pāṇḍu; patronymic name for Yudhiṣṭhira, Bhīma, Arjuna, Nakula, and Sahadeva.

†**Pāṇḍu**—The second of Vicitravīrya Bharata's sons, brother of Dhṛtarāṣṭra, husband of Kuntī and Mādrī, father of the five Pāṇḍavas. His physical father was the hermit Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vyāsa, his father's step-brother, by the levirate. His mother was Ambālikā, the youngest of the three princesses of the Kāśis. His elder brother Dhṛtarāṣṭra was born blind, because his mother, Ambikā, had spontaneously shut her eyes when Vyāsa had gone to her for purposes of the levirate. Ambālikā had spontaneously paled when she saw Vyāsa, so her son was born pale and called Pāṇḍu, "the pale." Since Pāṇḍu's infirmity was the lesser, he became the Bhārata king and had a splendid reign. He then retired to the Himālayan forests, leaving the rule of the kingdom to the blind Dhṛtarāṣṭra. Hunting in the forest once, he shot and killed a buck that had mounted a doe. In fact it was a seer and his wife who had simply taken on the forms of deer. The buck cursed Pāṇḍu to die the next time he experienced the bliss of love, so Pāṇḍu swore celibacy and took up an ascetic way of life. Later he became convinced he needed sons in order to gain heaven, so he persuaded his reluctant wife Kuntī to use a magical formula a seer had once given her, a formula that summoned any God she might wish for purposes of sexual union. At her husband's insistence she summoned Dharma, Vāyu (the Wind), and Indra, each of whom fathered one son: Yudhiṣṭhira, Bhīmasena, and Arjuna, respectively. She loaned the formula to her co-wife, Mādrī, who summoned up the twin Aśvins and presented Pāṇḍu with the twin boys Nakula and Sahadeva. Some time later, one springtime, Pāṇḍu was overcome with lust for Mādrī and died making love with her. Mādrī ascended his funeral pyre, leaving her two boys to Kuntī's care.

Parāśara—The son of the seer Śakti, who was the son of the "dean" of the ancient seers of the Veda, Vasiṣṭha. Parāśara's father was locked in a feud with King Kalmāṣapāda of Ayodhyā, which led to the king's killing and consuming him and the rest of Vasiṣṭha's one hundred sons (partly through the power of a curse of Śakti's, the king had become possessed by a man-eating Rākṣasa), but not before Śakti had impregnated his wife with Parāśara. When the young brahmin learned how his father had died, he undertook to exterminate all Rākṣasas from the earth with a sacrificial ritual. He was dissuaded (though not by his grandfather, Vasiṣṭha) by some seers, including the original progenitor of the Rākṣasas, Pulastya. Parāśara hurled his unresolved rage onto the northern slopes of the Himālayas, where it still burns (1.166–72 [B. 1.176–81]). Later this eminent seer of the Vedic rites fathered Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vyāsa upon the Yamunā River ferry-girl Satyavatī (restoring her virginity afterward; she later became the wife and queen of Śaṃtanu Bharata) (1.99 [B. 1.105]).

Parikṣit—First Bharata dynast in the age after the war; the son of Abhimanyu and Uttarā. He was killed in the womb by Aśvatthāman's magical arrow (see Book 10, Chapters 13–16 [B. 10.13–16]), born dead (14.65.8–9 [B. 14.66]), and revived by Kṛṣṇa (14.68.23–24 [B. 14.69]). He was the father of Janamejaya Bharata. Parikṣit insulted a brahmin ascetic by hanging a dead snake around his neck and was cursed to die by the bite of the snake Takṣaka. The curse came true in spite of the king's precautions (1.3 [B. 1.3] and 1.36–40 [B. 1.40–44]).

†**Pārtha**—Son of Pṛthā, that is, Kuntī; matronymic name of Yudhiṣṭhira, Bhīma, and Arjuna.

Phalguna—Alternative name of Arjuna.

Prajāpati—"Lord of Creatures"; see s.v. "Progenitor."

Progenitor—God from whom all beings derive, the Creator, the "Grandfather" of all creatures, Prajāpati (basically the same as the God Brahmā in some late Vedic texts). In addition, certain "patriarchs" who gave rise to different orders of creatures—for example, the seer Kaśyapa—are also termed *prajāpati-s*, "progenitors."

†**Pṛthā**—Daughter of the Vṛṣṇi prince Śūra (thus the sister of Vasudeva and aunt of Kṛṣṇa), who became the first wife of Pāṇḍu and the mother of Yudhiṣṭhira, Bhīmasena, and Arjuna. Her hospitable treatment of a sage visiting her father's house when she was a young maiden resulted in the sage giving her a magical formula that would infallibly summon whatever God she wished. Experimenting with it, she summoned the Sun, who impregnated her and then restored her virginity. She hid her pregnancy and set the baby afloat on the Aśva River. (The baby was eventually found and adopted by the *sūta* Adhiratha and his wife Rādhā, and they called him Vasuṣeṇa. He later became known as Karṇa; see s.v. "Karṇa"). After her marriage to Pāṇḍu that king was cursed to live a celibate life upon pain of death. When he wished for sons, Pṛthā told him of her formula and, at his repeated insistence, she called up Dharma, the Wind, and Indra, in turn, conceiving Yudhiṣṭhira, Bhīmasena, and Arjuna. She loaned the formula to her co-wife Mādrī who conceived the twins Nakula and Sahadeva. After the death of Pāṇḍu and Mādrī, Pṛthā was mother to all five of the Pāṇḍavas. She stayed in Hāstinapura during the thirteen years of the Pāṇḍavas' wandering outside their kingdom and through the time of the war as well. After the war, as funeral rites were being performed, she dramatically told Yudhiṣṭhira to pour water for Karṇa as well, revealing his true parentage. Deeply anguished, Yudhiṣṭhira cursed women to be unable to keep secrets in the future. Fifteen years later Pṛthā accompanied Dhṛtarāṣṭra and Gāndhārī to the forest, and three years later she perished in the same forest fire that killed them.

Pūru—The most pious of the sons of Yayāti (the son of Nahuṣa in the line of Ilā, founder of the "lunar dynasty"; Yayāti was "tenth from the Progenitor," see Appendix 3, Chart 1) and the dynast from whom the Bharatas descended. Pūru, Yayāti's youngest son, was the only one of his sons who agreed to take on his father's old age when Yayāti wished to remain young. Yayāti ruled well for a thousand years with the youth of Pūru and then returned it to him and made Pūru his successor (1.78–80 [B. 1.83–85]).

Pūṣan—A Vedic God (whose name means "nourishing") who was originally a form of the Sun. He appears occasionally in the *MBh* in lists of Gods.

Rādheya—Matronymic name of Karṇa, whose adoptive mother's name was Rādhā.

†**Rāma Jāmadagnya**—A Bhārgava brahmin seer who resides on Mount Mahendra in Eastern India. He was the son of Jamadagni and is famous in the *MBh* for his virtually complete slaughter of the world's kṣatriyas twenty-one times over. He was avenging the abuse and killing of his father by kṣatriyas (in some accounts new kṣatriyas were engendered each time as brahmin men impregnated the kṣatriya widows; in one account the widows hid some of their sons from Rāma's wrath). Rāma made five lakes with the blood of slain kṣatriyas at Samantapañcaka near Kurukṣetra, "the Field of Kuru." The *MBh* as a whole expresses ambivalence toward Rāma. His bloody feat resonates with various brahmin stories depicting abuse of brahmins by kṣatriyas and represents one of the typical brahmin responses to that abuse; on the other hand, in the rendition of his exploits in 12.49 (B. 12.49) he was banished by a seer for stripping the earth of kings, and the seer Kaśyapa then rescued the earth by making kings out of some the kṣatriyas who had been hidden from Rāma. He was unable to defeat Bhīṣma in a pitched duel of twenty-three days (they fought to a draw), and he was admonished by his Bhārgava ancestors never again to attack a kṣatriya like Bhīṣma. Rāma is also famous, and occasions ambivalence in the text, because he unhesitatingly obeyed his father's command to kill his mother Reṇukā for a wayward sexual desire. A story told of a different, obviously allegorical character ("Slow-to-Act") at 12.258 (B. 12.267) parallels this deed so closely that it must be a criticism of Rāma's unthinking obedience and matricide. Rāma appears in the main story of the *MBh* from time to time—he is said to have taught Bhīṣma weaponry when Bhīṣma was a child; he fought the protracted duel with Bhīṣma on behalf of the dishonored Ambā; he gave away his weapons to Droṇa; he taught Karṇa the *brahman* weapon and then, upon learning he was not a brahmin, cursed him to forget it when he needed it; and he spoke up in the Kaurava assembly that received and discussed Kṛṣṇa's peace embassy shortly before the war, told the assembly the story of King Dambhodbhava's foolish challenge to Nara and Nārāyaṇa, and revealed to the assembly that Arjuna and Kṛṣṇa were Nara and Nārāyaṇa respectively.

Rudra—an ancient Vedic God associated with destruction; the Howler, the father of tempests and the leader of a band of *rudra-s*, storm winds. This Vedic God was also a beneficent (*śiva*) healer, and in post-Vedic times Rudra is one of the names of the major God Śiva.

Śacī—the celestial queen of Indra, who is often referred to as the Śacīpati, "the lord, or husband of Śacī."

†Sahadeva—The fifth of the sons of Pāṇḍu, the second of the twins fathered by the twin Vedic Gods, the Aśvins, upon Pāṇḍu's second wife, Mādrī. Like the other twin, Nakula, Sahadeva chiefly stays in the background behind the three sons of Kuntī.

Śakra—The "mighty one"; an old Vedic epithet for Indra.

Śakuni—Son of Subala, king of Gāndhāra in the Northwest, and so brother of Dhṛtarāṣṭra's wife Gāndhārī. Wily and contentious, he was a mentor of his sister's oldest boy, Duryodhana, who constantly fed his nephew's resentment and hope for revenge. It was he who suggested that Duryodhana and his brothers lure Yudhiṣṭhira into the dicing match, and he, a skilled and experienced gamesman, who played against Yudhiṣṭhira and took advantage of him in the match.

Śalya—The king of the Madras in the northwest, the brother of Pāṇḍu's second wife, Mādrī; thus the maternal uncle of Nakula and Sahadeva, and by extension a kind of uncle of the other Pāṇḍavas. Śalya is most famous for his duplicity. When kings were aligning themselves with one side or the other as the great war loomed on the near horizon, Śalya, traveling from the northwest down to Upaplavya to join Yudhiṣṭhira, accepted lavish hospitality from Duryodhana without realizing Duryodhana was its provider. He bound himself to Duryodhana's service in return, then continued on to Yudhiṣṭhira and told him what had happened. Yudhiṣṭhira suggested that Śalya would certainly serve as Karṇa's charioteer when Karṇa faced Arjuna, and he instructed Śalya to demoralize him then. Śalya was happy to help by making Karṇa easy to kill, and he promised to do whatever else would aid the Pāṇḍava cause. He carried out this assignment and, as Karṇa's charioteer, fed that warrior a steady stream of demoralizing patter that did undermine Karṇa's confidence during his duel with Arjuna. He became the commander-in-chief of Duryodhana's army after Karṇa's death on the seventeenth day of the battle, and he was killed by Yudhiṣṭhira around noon on the eighteenth day. As he lay dead on the battlefield, his tongue stuck out of his mouth, and crows pecked and ate it.

Samantapañcaka—Kurukṣetra, or that part of it which is adjacent to "the lakes of Rāma," Rāma Jāmadagnya's five lakes of kṣatriya blood (see s.v. "Kurukṣetra" and "Rāma").

†Saṃjaya—Dhṛtarāṣṭra's charioteer; the son of Gavalgaṇa. He was granted divine vision by Vyāsa at the outset of the war and was thus able to tell Dhṛtarāṣṭra everything that happened on every part of the battlefield. His divine vision faded after Duryodhana died early in the morning after Aśvatthāman's night raid on the Pāṇḍava camp. He accompanied Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Gāndhārī, and Kuntī to the forest eighteen years after the war. Saṃjaya was able to escape the forest fire that consumed his master, but shortly after that he set out to the north on the Great Journey to heaven.

Śaṃtanu—Bhārata dynast, son of Pratīpa, father of Bhīṣma and Vicitravīrya, and great-grandfather of the Pāṇḍavas and Dhārtarāṣṭras. He was the reincarnation of King Mahābhiṣa, who was exiled from heaven for a time because of sexual effrontery toward the Goddess Gaṅgā in heaven. When Śaṃtanu's pious father Pratīpa later refused sexual overtures from Gaṅgā, Pratīpa proposed that his son Śaṃtanu become her husband, and this happened. Later, after Gaṅgā had left him, Śaṃtanu wished to marry Satyavatī, a young woman of the Yamunā River. Śaṃtanu's son Bhīṣma had to swear lifelong celibacy before Satyavatī's father would consent to the marriage. (1.91–95 [B. 96–101]).

Śatakratu—A frequent epithet for Indra in the *Ṛg Veda* and later Sanskrit literature; it means something like "he who is effective in hundreds of ways" or "he of a hundred sacrificial rites." In their translations of the *Ṛg Veda*, Geldner rendered it with *Ratreich* (abounding in wisdom, or good ideas), and Renou translated it in two ways with *(dieu) aux cent pouvoirs-rituels* (God of a hundred ritual powers) and *(dieu) aux cent pouvoirs-spirituels* (God of a hundred spiritual powers) (see *EVP* 17: 1–2, note). The *MBh* explains the name by relating that Indra carried out a hundred Horse Sacrifices in succession after slaying the Daitya Pāka (12.34.27).

Sātyaki—A Vṛṣṇi warrior, the son of Satyaka, grandson of Śini, and a cousin of Kṛṣṇa Vāsudeva. He fought on the side of the Pāṇḍavas and was one of the most prominent warriors in the battle. He was infamous for killing Bhūriśravas (see s.v. "Bhūriśravas"). Mutual vilification between Sātyaki and Kṛtavarman (over the former's killing of Bhūriśravas and the latter's participation in Aśvatthāman's night raid) at the time of a drunken feast thirty-six years after the war, led to the internecine strife that finished off the Yādava Vṛṣṇis when Sātyaki decapitated Kṛtavarman (16.4 [B. 16.3]).

Satyavatī—Young woman born of a fish-nymph in the Yamunā River (her father was Vasu Uparicara, king of the Cedis; she had a twin brother, and they were in fact the second set of twins born of a river through the agency of King Vasu [see 1.57 (B. 1.63)]). She became Śaṃtanu's wife after the Goddess of the other main river of the Doab in North Central India, Gaṅgā, left him. Before becoming Śaṃtanu's wife and the mother of Citrāṅgada and Vicitravīrya, Satyavatī acquiesced to the seer Parāśara and so became the mother of the seer Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana

Vyāsa. Failing to persuade her stepson Bhīṣma to engender sons on the widows of her two sons, she commissioned Vyāsa to do so; he fathered Paṇḍu, Dhṛtarāṣṭra, and Vidura (1.97–100 [B. 1.103–106]). She and Pāṇḍu's mother retired to the forest years later, after seers brought the body of Pāṇḍu and the Pāṇḍava boys down from the Himālayas into Hāstinapura, and the two died out there (1.119 [B. 1.128]).

Śikhaṇḍin, Śikhaṇḍinī—Offspring of the Pāñcāla king Drupada. Born as a girl (Śikhaṇḍinī), though her parents had been promised a boy by Rudra, she was raised as a boy and even married to a bride by her parents. She then miraculously acquired the body of a man, became Śikhaṇḍin, was trained in weapons by Droṇa (5.189–193 [B. 5.188–192]), and fought on the side of the Pāṇḍavas in the war, desiring to wreak vengeance on Bhīṣma for ruining his, her, past life as Ambā (see s.v. "Bhīṣma"). Śikhaṇḍin was instrumental in Bhīṣma's downfall in the war precisely because of the confusion of his sex (see s.v. "Bhīṣma"). Śikhaṇḍin was killed with Dhṛṣṭadyumna and his father Drupada's grandchildren, Draupadī's sons, cloven in two by Aśvatthāman in the night raid (10.8.59–60 [B. 10.8.63–4]).

Somadatta—One of the Kaurava Bharatas, the father of Bhūriśravas. Somadatta's exact pedigree is not spelled out in the *MBh*, but Sørensen's *Index to the Names in the Mahābhārata*, s.v. "Somadatta," cites the *Harivaṃśa* as saying that he was the son of Bhīṣma's paternal uncle Bāhlika, and this was accepted by van Buitenen (1: 472). His most notable characteristic was the enduring enmity between himself and the Yādava Vṛṣṇi prince Śini (Śini defeated and humiliated Somadatta before the entire *kṣatra* assembled at the bridegroom choice of one princess Devakī, whom Śini had snatched up to take as the wife for his kinsmen Vasudeva, father of Kṛṣṇa; having violently thrown Somadatta to the ground and grabbed him by the hair, Śini, his sword raised to strike, kicked Somadatta and told him "Live!" instead of killing him [7.119.9–19 {B. 7.144}]). That enmity extended into the next generation and was resolved in the course of the great Bhārata war by his son Bhūriśravas and Śini's grandson Sātyaki Śaineya (7.116–18 [B. 7.141–43]).

Śrī—A Goddess who is the embodiment of all the splendor and richness the earth produces, Royal Splendor; such richness in the form of an attribute or companion of the king who governs by the Law. In the *MBh* she is, at the divine level, the consort of Indra and, later, Viṣṇu. At the human level, a number of stories in the *MBh* depict her leaving one ruler for another when the former's behavior has fallen below the standard of Law (one in 12.124, others at 12.215–21).

Subhadrā—Daughter of Vasudeva and Devakī, sister of Kṛṣṇa, wife of Arjuna, and mother of Abhimanyu.

Sūrya—The ancient Vedic God who is the Sun. Father of Karṇa.

Ugrāyudha—An otherwise unknown imperial ruler (*cakravartin*) whom Bhīṣma is said to have vanquished (12.27.10 [B. 12.27]).

Upaplavya—A town in Virāṭa's kingdom to the southwest of the Bhārata kingdom. This town served as the base of operations for the Pāṇḍavas as war preparations were made. Some of their women stayed there during the fighting.

†Uttarā—The daughter of Virāṭa, king of the Matsyas, who became the wife of Abhimanyu, the son of Arjuna and Subhadrā (the sister of Kṛṣṇa). This tender young widow's lament of her husband at 11.20 (B. 11.20) is remarkable and moving. The *brahman*-head weapon which Aśvatthāman hurled when the Pāṇḍavas caught up with him at Vyāsa's hermitage (the morning after he had slaughtered all the descendants of the Pāñcāla king Drupada in his grotesque night raid) killed the unborn Parikṣit in her womb (the baby was revived by Kṛṣṇa after Uttarā gave birth to it, and Parikṣit became the dynast of the Bharatas).

Vaikartana—An epithet for Karṇa, understood to refer to his "cutting off" (*vikṛntati*) his innate armor and earrings at the behest of Indra (3.294 [B. 3.310]).

†Vaiśaṃpāyana—One of the pupils of Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vyāsa. He recited Vyāsa's *Great Bhārata* to Janamejaya, with Vyāsa listening, in the course of the Snake Sacrifice undertaken by that Bhārata dynast to avenge the killing of his father, Parkiṣit Bhārata, by the snake Takṣaka. So the *MBh* is basically presented as Vaiśaṃpāyana's recitation to Janamejaya, with the king's occasional questions.

Vāsava—A name of Indra.

Vasiṣṭha—An ancient seer of the Veda, grandfather of Parāśara, and great-grandfather of Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vyāsa..

Vasuṣeṇa—The name given to Karṇa by Adhiratha, the *sūta* who found him in the Gaṅgā and adopted him; see *MBh* 1.104.15 (B. 1.111.24).

Vāsudeva—"Son of Vasudeva"; a patronymic name of Kṛṣṇa.

Vāyu—The Vedic God Wind, who engendered Bhīmasena upon Pāṇḍu's wife Kuntī. Also the father of Hanumān, the divine monkey who assisted Rāma Dāśaratha in his campaign against the demon Rāvaṇa, who had kidnapped Rāma's wife Sītā and carried her off to his citadel, Laṅkā (the story of Rāma Dāśaratha, king of Ayodhyā, is told to Yudhiṣṭhira by the seer Mārkaṇḍeya at *MBh* 3.258–75 [B. 3.274–91] after he and his brothers had recovered their wife Draupadī after Jayadratha had carried her off).

†Vidura—The "steward," the low-caste brother of Dhṛtarāṣṭra and Pāṇḍu, who were all nominal sons of Vicitravīrya Bharata and actual sons, by levirate, of Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vyāsa. Son of the God Virtue (Dharma). The God Dharma was cursed by the ascetic Māṇḍavya to live a human life because Dharma had punished Māṇḍavya disproportionately for evil

he did as a child. (For the crime of spearing flies as a child, Māṇḍavya later suffered the punishment of impalement, which was erroneous in terms of criminal justice, as he was innocent of the crime charged (1.101 [B. 1.107–8]). When Satyavatī asked her son Vyāsa to engender another child on his brother Vicitravīrya's wife Ambikā, he agreed, but Ambikā could not bear having intercourse with the filthy ascetic another time. She sent her maidservant in her stead, and she pleased Vyāsa very much. Vidura was born of that union, "The God Dharma was born in the body of Vidura—possessing unlimited insight, aware of what is really true about things, innocent of anger and lust" (1.101.27–28 [B. 1.107]). Throughout the *MBh* Vidura was present at family councils and was a generally unheeded voice of principle and restraint. He favored the Pāṇḍavas and helped them from time to time, but he did not fight in the war (as he was not a kṣatriya). After the war he accompanied Dhṛtarāṣṭra to the forest and engaged in asceticism and yoga. Vidura's life ended when he used yoga to send his own body and life into Yudhiṣṭhira's once when the king came to visit him in the forest (15.33.24–26 [B. 15.26]).

Virāṭa—King of the Matsyas. (The Pāṇḍavas lived incognito in his kingdom for the thirteenth and final year of their "exile.") Virāṭa was the father of Uttarā, whom he gave to Arjuna in marriage for Arjuna's heroism in saving his kingdom from the raid of the Kauravas and Trigartas. Arjuna accepted her, but intended her for his son Abhimanyu. Virāṭa was an important and able ally of the Pāṇḍavas in the war and was killed, along with another such ally, Drupada, by Droṇa on the morning of the fifteenth day of the war.

Viśakhāyūpa—A little-mentioned sacred place in the far north where the Gods congregated and exerted themselves in rites. The Pāṇḍavas spent a year in the woods here shortly after Arjuna's return from his five years in heaven with his father, Indra. See *MBh* 3.88.12 (B. 3.90), 174.16–17 (B. 177), and 12.12.3 (B. 12.12).

Viṣṇu—God Supreme according to some parts of the *MBh*. In the basic framing story of the *MBh* Viṣṇu presides over the universe at a level above that of the Gods of the world, who are presided over by the Progenitor (Prajāpati) Brahmā. He is frequently identified with Nārāyaṇa and sometimes called Hari (see 1.15–17 [B. 1.17–19] or 1.58 [B. 1.64] for typical representations). In the *MBh* narrative a portion of Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa, Hari, is incarnate as the Vṛṣṇi prince Kṛṣṇa Vāsudeva.

Vṛṣasena—One of Karṇa's three sons; the other two were Suṣeṇa and Satyasena.

Vṛṣṇi—Kṛṣṇa's tribe; the name of one of the tribes of people descended from Yayāti's son Yadu, as were the Andhakas.

†**Vyāsa**—The seer Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vyāsa, *q.v.*

Wolf-Belly—Another name of Bhīmasena Pāṇḍava.

Yādava—A descendant of Yadu who was the eldest son of Yayāti. The Andhakas and Vṛṣṇis were tribes of this line.

Yama—The ancient Vedic God who is the Lord of Death and the World Guardian of the south, the realm of the departed ancestors. He carries a noose, or wields a rod, and he or his minions come to fetch the dying to "Yama's realm" or "Yama's abode." He is regularly called the "King of Dharma" (Dharmarāja), as Yudhiṣṭhira regularly is, and at times Yama and Dharma are interchangeable.

Yamunā—The western and southern of the two major rivers that define the Doab, the "Mesopotamia" of north central India. The eastern and northern of the two rivers is the Gaṅgā.

†**Yayāti**—An ancient and famous king descended from Ilā, the daughter of Manu, "the tenth from the Progenitor" (according to 1.71.1 [B. 1.76]). Yayāti was the son of Nahuṣa and the father of several sons who became the progenitors of the important lineages of northern and western India at the time depicted in the *MBh*, most notably Yadu, who gave rise to the Yādavas (among whom were the Andhakas and Vṛṣṇis), and Pūru, who gave rise to the Pauravas (among whom were the Bhāratas).

†**Yudhiṣṭhira**—The eldest of the sons of Pāṇḍu by Kuntī. His actual father was the God Virtue (Dharma). Among the sons of Pāṇḍu, Yudhiṣṭhira is outstanding for his learning, his wisdom, and his virtues, which include truthfulness, generosity, calmness, patience, gentleness, and steadiness. More than once in the course of the narrative he rescues one or all of his brothers by answering riddles posed by some malevolent agent or by demonstrating his fundamental virtues. On the other hand, his paradoxical addiction to gambling led to the disastrous crisis in the assembly hall of the Kauravas, where Draupadī was molested by the Dhārtarāṣṭras, and he and his brothers were bound by agreement to vacate their kingdom for thirteen years. His determination to honor that agreement punctiliously frustrated and angered his brothers and their wife, and at the end of the time, when the Kauravas refused to let the Pāṇḍavas reoccupy their half of the kingdom, Yudhiṣṭhira offered to settle peacefully for a mere five villages (5.31 [B. 5.31]). He was similarly magnanimous when the war was all but over and Duryodhana was hiding in a lake. Yudhiṣṭhira offered to relinquish the Pāṇḍava claims to their kingdom if Duryodhana could defeat any single one of the Pāṇḍavas in a duel with whatever weapon he chose (9.31 [B. 9.32]). As Yudhiṣṭhira had been guilty of reckless gambling, he was also guilty of outright offenses against the truth in connection with the war. He suborned his half-uncle Śalya to undermine Karṇa's will to fight at the time when Karṇa would face Arjuna (5.8 [B. 5.8]). And Yudhiṣṭhira played the crucial part in telling Droṇa the lie that undermined his willingness to fight (Bhīma killed an elephant named Aśvatthāman

and then told Droṇa that his son Aśvatthāman had been killed in battle; when Droṇa trustingly asked Yudhiṣṭhira to know the truth, Yudhiṣṭhira confirmed to Droṇa that "Aśvatthāman" had been slain, adding the word "elephant" under his breath; see 7.164.71–74 [B.190.14–18 {191 in Roy}] and 7.164.97–110 [B. 190.45 ff. {191 in Roy}]). Yudhiṣṭhira was filled with tremendous guilt and anguish after the war, particularly over the death of Abhimanyu, and later, when he learned the truth of Karṇa's identity, over the horror of his alienation from and his occasioning the death of his elder brother. Yudhiṣṭhira wished to withdraw into a penitential and reflective life in the forest after the war, and initially refused to rule the conquered Bhārata kingdom. He was persuaded finally to take the rule, but he spent the first phase of his rule taking instructions in all the Laws from his nominal grandfather Bhīṣma, who lay dying where he fell on the battlefield like a fading sun. After Bhīṣma died Yudhiṣṭhira performed a Horse Sacrifice as expiation for the wrongs committed in the course of waging the war, and, again expressing the intention to withdraw to the forest, he gave the earth to Vyāsa and the brahmins (14.91.7ff. [B. 89.7ff.]). Vyāsa, with Kṛṣṇa's endorsement, gave the earth back to Yudhiṣṭhira, and Yudhiṣṭhira then ruled the kingdom under Dhṛtarāṣṭra's titular rule for fifteen years and then on his own for twenty-one more. Thirty-six years after the war, when he learned of the demise of the Vṛṣṇis, including Kṛṣṇa, Yudhiṣṭhira decided it was time to go to heaven, so he installed Parikṣit on the throne and led his brothers and Draupadī on the "Great Journey," the walk to heaven.

Yuyudhāna—Another name for Sātyaki.

†Yuyutsu—Son of Dhṛtarāṣṭra with a vaiśya woman; thus Yuyutsu was not one of the hundred wicked Dhārtarāṣṭras. He defected to the side of the Pāṇḍavas just before the violence of the war began and fought on their side. After the war he served as an occasional regent at times when the Pāṇḍavas left Hāstinapura.

Appendix 3: Interrelationships among the Main Characters

Chart 1. The Descent of the Bharatas from the Beginning of the World: The *Mahābhārata's* Main Account

God, Brahmā

Notes

(Marīcī)
(one of the ten)
|
Kaśyapa

Ten sons born of his thought (*pracetas*)
|
Dakṣa, the Progenitor of the World's Beings

= **Dakṣāyaṇī**
|
Vivasvat, the Bright One

There are different accounts of the descent of kings from different original creators. This one is based on *MBh* 1.70.

One of Dakṣa's thirteen principal daughters, all married to Kaśyapa, who were the mothers of the world's beings.

Yama Vaivasvata

Martaṇḍa, the Sun

Manu Vaivasvata

Ikṣvāku
Manu's fifth son, the founder of the "Solar Dynasty" at Ayodhyā

Ilā, Iḍā
Manu's daughter and eighth child, the founder of the "Lunar Dynasty"

"Kings and other kṣatriyas claim descent in the line of Ilā or that of Ikṣvāku forming 101 lineages." (*MBh* 2.13.4–5)

Purūravas

Nahuṣa

Yayāti
Son of Nahuṣa and father of many different peoples: Mlecchas, Greeks, Bhojas, and Yādavas, in addition to Pūru's sons

The most prominent dynasts of most ancient history; less prominent, intermediate kings are not mentioned.

Pūru
Bharata
Kuru
Pratīpa
Śaṃtanu

Chart 2. The Four Generations of Bharatas Leading up to the Split of the Family and the War

The River Gaṅgā = Śaṃtanu = Satyavatī = The seer **Parāśara**, grandson of the seer Vasiṣṭha

The River Gaṅgā: First wife of Śaṃtanu; she ends their marriage after Bhīṣma is born

Śaṃtanu: Son of Pratīpa

Satyavatī: "Daughter" of the River Yamunā

Satyavatī = Parāśara: Premarital union

Bhīṣma
Swears lifelong celibacy so his father can marry Satyavatī

Vicitravīrya
Dies before engendering sons on his wives

Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vyāsa
The seer Vyāsa, by a kind of levirate, engenders three sons on Vicitravīrya's two wives and one of the wife's maids.

Dhṛtarāṣṭra
Born blind; father of a hundred sons with Gāndhārī

Pāṇḍu
Born "pale"; nominal father of five semi-divine sons

Vidura
The "steward"; born of a serving woman, hence of low caste

The Dhārtarāṣṭras

The Pāṇḍavas

(Pāṇḍu) = Pṛthā, Kuntī

Duryodhana
Duḥśāsana
Durmukha
Vikarṇa
Citrasena
Viviṃśati
Duḥsaha
⋮

Yudhiṣṭhira — Dharma
Bhīmasena — Vāyu (Wind)
Arjuna — Indra

(Pāṇḍu) = Mādrī

Nakula, **Sahadeva** — **the Aśvins (twins)**

Gods, who were actual, physical fathers of Pāṇḍu's sons

Chart 3. The Kauravas and the Pāṇḍavas

The Kaurava Court

Bhīṣma
The celibate "patriarch"

Dhṛtarāṣṭra, the blind king, and **Gāndhārī**

Kṛpa
The first brahmin weapons-teacher of the Kauravas of the court

Droṇa
A greater brahmin weapons-teacher of the Kauravas of the court

Vidura
The wise uncle; incarnation of Dharma

Saṃjaya
Dhṛtarāṣṭra's charioteer and bard

Śakuni
Gāndhārī's wily brother

Duryodhana
The envious and resentful prince

Karṇa
The foundling, Duryodhana's most loyal ally

Vikarṇa
The most reasonable Dhārtarāṣṭra

Duḥśāsana
The most vicious Dhārtarāṣṭra

The Pāṇḍavas and Their Offspring

Children with Draupadī	The Pāṇḍavas	Other Wives	Other Children
Prativindhya	Yudhiṣṭhira	Devikā Śaibyā	Yaudheya
Sutasoma	Bhīma (Bhīmasena, Wolf-Belly)	Baladharā of the Kāśis	Sarvaga
		Hiḍimbā Rākṣasī	Ghaṭotkaca
Śrutakīrta	Arjuna (Dhanaṃjaya, Phalguna)	Citraṅgadā of Maṇalūra*	Babhruvāhana
		Ulūpī, a Nāga princess	Irāvat
		Subhadrā Vṛṣṇi	Abhimanyu
Śatānīka	Nakula	Kareṇuvatī Caidyā	Niramitra
Śrutakarman	Sahadeva	Vijayā Mādrī	Suhotra

*Maṇipūra in the northern manuscripts.

Dhaumya was the Pāṇḍavas' domestic priest, and Kṛṣṇa was their regular counselor. Brahmins frequently followed after them, and Nārada and other sages frequently came to them and advised them.

The Line of Bharata Descent into the Postwar Period

Pāṇḍu
Arjuna
Abhimanyu
Parikṣit, born dead, revived by Kṛṣṇa
Janamejaya

Chart 4. Main Groups of People in the Two Battle Alliances

Kaurava Bharatas and Their Allies Forming Eleven Armies

Leader: Duryodhana

Main allies bringing whole armies
- Bhagadatta from Prāgjyotiṣa (Assam)
- Bhūriśravas
- Madras under Śalya
- Bhojas and Andhakas under Kṛtavarman
- Kāmbojas under Sudakṣiṇa
- Nīla from the south
- Sindhus and Suvīras under Jayadratha
- Vinda of Avanti
- Anuvinda of Avanti
- Kekayas, though their five brother-kings joined Yudhiṣṭhira

Military commanders-in-chief
- Bhīṣma, days 1–10 of the war
- Droṇa, days 11–15
- Karṇa, days 16–17
- Śalya, day 18

Main warriors
- Bhīṣma, the leader of the clan
- Droṇa, the brahmin weapons-teacher
- Duḥśāsana and the other Dhārtarāṣṭras
- Karṇa, Duryodhana's loyal friend
- Aśvatthāman, Droṇa's son
- Kṛtavarman Vṛṣṇi
- Jayadratha of Sindhu, brother-in-law of Duryodhana
- Śakuni, Duryodhana's maternal uncle
- Bāhlika Bharata
- Somadatta Bharata
- Bhūriśravas Bharata, ritually very pious
- Kṛpa, another brahmin weapons-teacher
- Śalya,[5] the traitorous maternal uncle of Nakula and Sahadeva
- Vinda and Anuvinda of Avanti
- Trigartas, 'Warriors Sworn' to the defeat of Arjuna
- Bhagadatta of Prāgjyotiṣa, atop an elephant

Pāṇḍava Bharatas and Their Allies Forming Seven Armies

Leader: Yudhiṣṭhira

Main allies bringing whole armies
- Pāñcālas under King Drupada[1]
- Matsyas under King Virāṭa[2]
- Sātvatas; Vṛṣṇis under Sātyaki
- Cedis under Dhṛṣṭaketu
- Pāṇḍyas
- Māgadhas under King Jayatsena
- Śibi Auśīnara[3]
- Kāśirāja

Military commander-in-chief
- Dhṛṣṭadyumna Pāñcāla,[4] for all eighteen days

Main warriors
- Arjuna
- Kṛṣṇa, noncombatant, Arjuna's charioteer
- Bhīmasena
- Dhṛṣṭadyumna
- Sātyaki Vṛṣṇi
- Cekitāna Vṛṣṇi
- Abhimanyu
- Śikhaṇḍin
- Dhṛṣṭaketu,[6] king of the Cedis
- Nakula
- Sahadeva
- Ghaṭotkaca[7]
- Five Kekaya princes
- Uttamaujas Pāñcāla, wheel-guard of Arjuna
- Yudhāmanyu Pāñcāla, wheel-guard of Arjuna

1. Drupada's daughter Kṛṣṇā (Draupadī) was the wife of the five Pāṇḍavas; her brother Dhṛṣṭadyumna became their commander-in-chief.
2. Virāṭa's daughter Uttarā was newly married to Arjuna's young son Abhimanyu.
3. This listing of principal allies is based on *MBh* 5.19, which lists ten allies contributing armies to Duryodhana's side and six contributing armies to Yudhiṣṭhira's. Each leader is presumed to provide an army of his own. At *MBh* 4.67.16 ff., the king of Kāśi and King Śibi are said to each arrive at Upaplavya with an army to aid the Pāṇḍavas.
4. Draupadī's brother, so the brother-in-law of the five Pāṇḍavas.
5. Brother of Pāṇḍu's second wife Mādrī.
6. Dhṛṣṭaketu was the son of Śiśupāla, whom Kṛṣṇa slew at Yudhiṣṭhira's Royal Consecration. He was also Nakula Pāṇḍava's father-in-law; Nakula's second wife was his daughter Kareṇuvatī.
7. Ghaṭotkaca was Bhīmasena's half-Rākṣasa son, the result of a liaison with the Rākṣasī Hiḍimbā.

Appendix 4: Certain Difficult Sanskrit Words and Their Usual Translations

For the benefit of Indologists and others interested in Indian culture, I give here a list of the most important Sanskrit concepts whose translations present some difficulties, along with brief indications of how I have handled these words in the translation. These points should also help all readers understand better some of my English usage in the translation. What I present in this list are simply the formulas and patterns I use for translating each word, except in the special case of *dharma*, which is accompanied by longer explanations. The list is presented in the order of the Sanskrit syllabary.

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ahiṃsā—Harmlessness.
āśrama—(1) Hermitage, retreat. (2) A (religious) Pattern of Life, one of the four particular patterns of life centered upon doing the dharma of *(a)* student, *(b)* householder, *(c)* forest sage, or *(d)* renouncer.
ṛṣi—Seer, brahmin.
karman—(1) Deed(s), work; rite. (2) "Karma" in the current Western sense of one's past deeds that will influence one's future lives.
guṇa(s)—(1) Attribute(s), trait(s), quality(-ies), virtue(s). (2) The three Attributes of Nature (*prakṛti*).
tapas—Asceticism, ascetic practices, ascetic "heat(ing)"; suffering, pain, hardship (accepted and endured).
tejas—fire, intensity, brilliance; (fiery) energy that is an attribute of a person or a person's behavior.
dharma—(1A) Good Deed(s);[1] Merit; Meritorious Deed(s). (1B) Duty (and,

1. Deeds (*karmāṇi*) of dharma done in this world persist as a "good deed" (*sukṛta*) or "Merit" (*puṇyakarman*). (The translation "merit" fits to the extent that it implies justice, a

in specific contexts, rule, norm, custom, obligation, responsibility). (1C) A Law,[2] the Laws, the Law,[3] Law.[4] (1D) Lawful Deed(s), Meritorious Lawful Deed(s). (1E) The Good Law.

correspondence between one's deed and its consequences in the world beyond death. To the extent that "merit" might imply a divine judge assessing and rewarding "merit," the term is misleading; see Hacker, "Dharma im Hinduismus," pp. 103–4, who emphasizes the automatic functioning of deeds done.) Like the basic word *karman* ("deed, action, work, rite"), the word *dharma* can refer to both the this-worldly action and the "persisting action," *i.e.*, the Merit or *puṇyakarman* that makes one's life after death good; see Butzenberger, "Ancient Indian Conceptions of Man's Destiny after Death, pt. 1: 105, for a nice statement of this aspect of *karman* and Hacker, "Dharma im Hinduismus," pp. 102–3 for another. For a few of many possible examples of dharma signifying "one's good deeds, one's good 'karma,'" see MBh 12.37.28, 139.61, and 148.7.

2. To the extent that the contemporary English word *law* is in the process of narrowing down merely to civil and criminal law, it makes a sometimes awkward fit for dharma. But "law," in its older and broader usage, is appropriate and even necessary to translate dharma, because a key element of the word *dharma* is "holding" or "binding" or "limiting." Like "law," dharma prescribes and limits the actions of people, and like "law" dharma restrains people as a set of socially sanctioned norms which is supposed to work for the good of everyone. Unlike "law," dharma is primarily a species of action (*karman*), action which is socially prescribed, while "law" is prescription or norm concerning actions. At times, however, "dharma" does slide into the meanings of "rule, norm, prescription," and frequently dharma is used to refer to a whole collectivity of prescribed deeds together, in such a way that the distinction between "deed" and "prescription" is blurred (see the note on this collective use of the word below).

Deeds of dharma are thus both opportunities to ensure the goodness of one's afterlife *and*, sometimes, obligations to perform a particular action, sometimes despite the fact that the obligation of dharma may run counter to one's immediate gratification (for example, see the implicit and explicit juxtaposition of dharma and kāma ["pleasure, lust, desire"] in Yayāti's dealings with Śarmiṣṭhā, Devayānī, and the latter's father Śukra in MBh 1.76.25–1.78.40) or may deplete one's wealth or cost one victory in battle (see the debate between Kṛṣṇa and his brother Balarāma in MBh 9.59). This essentially religious element of the word requires regular registration in the translation, thus I use "Merit" and "Meritorious Deed" as regular translations of *dharma*. All kinds of people have particular opportunities and obligations of dharma, which vary according to the kind of people they are (according to sex, *varṇa*, *āśrama*, tribe, and country, basically) and it is typical in the *MBh* to refer to these sets of obligations and opportunities as *dharmāḥ*, *dharma-s*, plural, and to some set of them, or to all of them, collectively as *dharma*.

3. The very frequent and important collective usage of *dharma* in the singular. The word *dharma* in the singular is often used as a collective noun to refer to an aggregation of dharmas, and often enough it seems to refer to the entire aggregation of dharma-deeds that people can and should do. Upon rare occasion I translate such collective instances of *dharma* as "the Law," or, sometimes, as "the Good Law," in which I intend to register the religious element of the word; but usually I render this sense of the word with "the Laws." I avoid "the Law" because it will be too easily confused with abstract, cosmological senses of "dharma" that are basically inappropriate to the *MBh*.

Because the restrictions and opportunities of dharma do vary in part according to one's birth-kind (*jāti*), there is some resemblance of dharma to some ideas of a natural law, and the collective uses of the word just mentioned, contribute to this impression, particularly when the basic concreteness and particularity of the word is not seen. Nonetheless, dharma is not some invisible cosmic unity, some order that operates in the world according to its own essence and energy (see Halbfass, "Dharma in the Self-Understanding of Traditional Hinduism," 315).

As the late Wilhelm Halbfass noted in his essay "Dharma in Traditional Hinduism" there is a frequent tendency, even among Indologists and Sanskritists, to impose "a universal cosmological interpretation of *dharma*," upon these old texts ("Dharma in Traditional Hinduism," 316), one that "presupposes that the concept of *dharma* involves universal cosmic

(2A) Right (noun) and Right (adjective). (2B) Justice and Just. (3) Virtue,[5] Good Character; Virtuous.

The word *dharma* has an opposite, *adharma*, which generally occurs as the negative of senses 1A, 1D, and 2 (e.g., "Bad Deed; Unlawful Deed (leading to a hell); Wrong"). All three senses of dharma concern people "choosing to do (or, later, be) right or good" in relation to fundamental and important elements of human life. The second sense, "Right," represents uses of the word in contexts in which "rightness" (often as opposed to "wrong," adharma) alone is the word's salient element. The first and the third senses of the word are fuller, richer occurrences of it, and, by an extremely interesting historical development, "Right Deed" comes to be opposed and complemented by "Right Character."[6] Besides the general uses of the word mentioned above, there are four frequently recurring specialized uses that I will mention here: (1) *dharmeṇa* is generally translated "in accordance with Law," or "Lawfully"; (2) *dharmātman* is generally translated with "(always, or, usually) mindful of (the) Law"; (3) *dharmarāja*, an epithet typically applied to Yudhiṣṭhira, is "the King of Law," but this is also an epithet for Yama, the Lord of the Dead (see the discussion in the introduction to the *Śāntiparvan*); (4) Dharma is also the proper name of a personification of dharma (conceived more as "Virtue" than "Law") as a God called Dharma, a name which I do not translate but transcribe as Dharma.

***prakṛti* (in Sāṃkhya usage)**—Nature; the original substance of all things, which changes and develops in accordance with its own inner dynamic forces.

buddhi—understanding, insight; intelligence, mind; (Higher) Mind in Sāṃkhya psychology.

brahman—*brahman*, untranslated, merely transcribed; see the glossary.

laws" (ibid., 316). But, as Halbfass writes there, "[T]he idea of an objective natural order effective in the world, specifically in inanimate things, i.e., of something like a natural law, has little importance for the ancient and traditional usage of *dharma*" (ibid.). The use of dharma in the kind of compound words I mentioned above is *aggregative*; it does not refer to some cosmic entity that is Dharma, not even when the word occurs outside of such compounds and in the singular. As Halbfass writes, "[E]ven in the later [post-Vedic and post-*MBh*] use of the concept, when the singular prevailed, a plurality of precisely established 'rules' remained a determining and constitutive factor of *dharma*" (ibid.).

4. This usage is the most general and vague translation of the word. It should be seen to imply all three of the basic factors of dharma: *karman* (reference to a deed or activity or form of work), normative sanction (authoritative prescription or proscription of some form of action, and, or, the expectation on the part of significant other people that one ought to conform to the norm), and the unseen form of the deed that will benefit (or harm) one in the next world. Sometimes "Law" signifies "a Lawful Deed," and sometimes it signifies the entire aggregation of all particular Laws, that is, what I occasionally render with "the Good Law."

5. This sense of *dharma* is presented and discussed in the introduction to *The Book of Peace*, pp. 104–5 and 109–14.

6. See "The Complex Senses of Dharma in the *Mahābhārata*" in ibid., pp. 105 ff.

bhavat—translated by second-person singular forms; sometimes "sir" is appended to give a sense of its slight honorific use.
manas—mind; will, heart, feelings, the (Lower) Mind in Sāṃkhya psychology.
mahātman—exalted, exalted one.
mokṣa—Freedom, Absolute Freedom; Escape (from suffering and *saṃsāra*).
yoga—discipline of (yoga) meditation.

Appendix 5: List of English Formulas and the Sanskrit Words They Normally Translate

asceticism—*tapas.*
attribute(s)—Technical uses of the word *guṇa*, which signifies an attribute or quality or feature of some more basic thing; *guṇa* is also rendered with (good) quality, virtue, and so forth.
Attributes [of Nature]—The three *guṇas* of Nature (*prakṛti*) according to Sāṃkhya: Lightness (*sattva*), Energy (*rajas*), and Darkness (*tamas*).
Darkness—*tamas*, one of the three Attributes of Nature *(q.v.)*.
Energy—*rajas*, one of the three Attributes of Nature *(q.v.)*.
(fiery) energy; fire, Fire—*tejas*, a fiery energy within people that makes them "sharp" and "bright"; an inner luster based on one's inherent being, one's practice of virtue, and or the performance of difficult meritorious deeds. This word is also rendered sometimes with "brilliance" and "brilliant."
exalted (one)—*mahātman.*
Freedom, Absolute Freedom—*mokṣa.*
God(s)—*devas.* The Gods referred to here are the many "shining ones," the *devas*, of the three worlds (earth, air, and the high sky).
(the) Good Law—dharma.
hermitage—*āśrama.*
karma—*karman;* the energy of one's past actions accumulated in this life and in previous lives.
law—*maryādā;* prescriptions or proscriptions that are sanctioned by the governing authority of a society, but which are not, by themselves, Merit-producing. Dharma is, in part, a species of *maryādā*, law, but *maryādā* as such is not dharma.
Law, Lawful Deed—dharma.
Lightness—*sattva*, one of the three Attributes of Nature (*q.v.*).

meditation; the regimen of (yoga) meditation—yoga, the regimen or discipline one undertakes to realize the highest good, that is, ultimate beatitude (variously conceived) and *mokṣa.*
Merit, Meritorious Lawful Deed—dharma.
mind—manas, *cetas, citta,* buddhi, and so on, in nontechnical contexts.
Mind (Higher Mind)—buddhi, in Sāṃkhya technical contexts, which distinguish buddhi from manas, the Lower Mind.
Mind (Lower Mind)—manas (and *cetas, citta*), in Sāṃkhya technical contexts, which add buddhi as a psychic organ. The Lower Mind coordinates the impressions of the sense faculties, synthesizes them into ideas, and conveys them upward to the buddhi with or without the mediating Ego (*ahaṃkāra*).
Nature—*prakṛti,* in Sāṃkhya uses of the word.
Naysayers—Nāstikas, Buddhists, Jains, and the like; anyone denying the transcendent value of the Vedas, the special value of brahmins' knowledge, and the power of Vedic rituals.
Order (of society)—*varṇa;* one of the four general "castes" (brahmins, kṣatriyas, vaiśyas, and śūdras).
(religious) Pattern(s) (of Life)—*āśrama,* in the sense of one of the various patterns for living, each of which has its own ethical priorities, its own Meritorious Deeds and Obligations (dharma); commonly in the *MBh* they are said to be an ordered set of four "life-stages"—celibate student, married householder, forest hermit, and wandering mendicant.
perfection—*siddhi.*
Person—*puruṣa, puṃs* (*pumān* in the nominative singular), in Sāṃkhya uses of the words.
Profit—artha, often translated with "Riches" and "Success."
Progenitor—*prajāpati,* "Lord of Creatures," or "Lord of Offspring or Progeny"; a "patriarch" responsible for some part of the process of creation.
rebirth—*saṃsāra;* typically this term means one specific instance of being born again after dying, occasionally it refers to the general fact of being reborn repeatedly.
Riches—artha, often translated with "Profit" and "Success."
Right, Righteous—dharma.
sage—*muni, vipra, kavi.*
seer—*ṛṣi.*
sense(s) (faculties)—*indriyas.*
Success—artha, often translated with "Profit" and "Riches."
teacher—*guru.*
Virtue—dharma.

Appendix 6: The Classification of Triṣṭubh Meters

Because differing forms of triṣṭubh stanzas have been the focus of research and discussion for several decades now, I have given them extra attention. Here I outline the classification of triṣṭubh stanzas that I employ in this volume. I begin with a characterization of all triṣṭubhs (and their close cousin, the jagatī), which I take from Franklin Edgerton's watershed article on the subject, "The Epic *Triṣṭubh* and Its Hypermetric Varieties."

> A triṣṭubh may have anywhere from ten to thirteen syllables, a jagatī from eleven to at least thirteen (possibly more). The distinction between the two is solely based on the cadence; a triṣṭubh always ends ⏑ – × [the × signifies the syllable may be either long or short], a jagatī always ends ⏑ – ⏑ ×; in western terms, the latter ends in a diiambus, the former in a catalectic diiambus. This is in the Mbh. absolutely the only distinction between the two; in certain parts of the epic they are commonly mingled in the same stanza; and it is ordinarily unnecessary to separate them.[1]

Triṣṭubhs with more than eleven syllables (and jagatīs with more than twelve) are hypermetric forms; submetric forms of both types also occur. Another important feature of triṣṭubh-jagatī verses is the quantitative pattern of "light" and "heavy" syllables in the verse, and the degree to which that pattern is restricted or free.

Edgerton's examination of those parts of the critical edition of the *MBh* that had been completed by the late 1930s led him to distinguish two broad types of epic triṣṭubh-jagatī verses. He called the first of these the Virāṭa type, in which "there are (1) no hypermetric lines; (2) practically no mixture of triṣṭubh and jagatī-pādas in the same stanza; and (3) practically

1. Franklin Edgerton, "The Epic Triṣṭubh and Its Hypermetric Varieties," 159.

no departure from [a particular rigid quantitative pattern] which is identical with that of the Classical upajāti" triṣṭubh.[2] The classical upajāti quantitative pattern is this: × – ⏑ – – | ⏑ ⏑ – ⏑ – × (the vertical bar represents the regular caesura after the fifth syllable). Syllables two-three-four of these verses are sometimes referred to as the "opening"; syllables five-six-seven as the "break"; and syllables eight-nine-ten as the "cadence." All triṣṭubhs have the cadence – ⏑ –, and the classical Sanskrit upajāti always has – ⏑ – for its opening and – ⏑ ⏑ for its break. "Classical upajāti" is thus one of the categories of epic triṣṭubh I note. Edgerton's second type, which he called the Sabhā type, in which "we have (1) more than one hypermetric pāda in every four stanzas, (2) not infrequent occurrence of jagatī pādas in triṣṭubh stanzas, and occasionally vice versa, and (3) obviously no attempt to approximate the quantitative scheme of the Classical upajāti." [3] Verses of the classical upajāti pattern occur within the Sabhā-type runs of verse, but there is generally much greater heterogeneity, that is much less prosodic fixity, or restraint, in these stanzas. In their heterogeneity, stanza runs of this second type are closer to the general patterns of Vedic prosody, including Vedic triṣṭubhs, which are the lineal ancestors of the epic triṣṭubhs.[4] This second type of epic triṣṭubh is of great interest because it is certainly an older type of triṣṭubh versification [5] and because its heterogeneity holds out hope that further examination may disclose other meaningful patterns within runs of these stanzas.

In *The Warrior Code of India's Sacred Song*, Mary Carroll Smith excised the eight thousand lines of Edgerton's Sabhā type of *MBh* triṣṭubh (which she refers to as "non-regular" triṣṭubhs), read them apart from the rest of the text, and argued that they contain the warrior kernel of the entire great epic. This is not the place to review her arguments about the history of the *MBh*, but I do borrow her terms "non-regular" and "irregular" triṣṭubh

2. Edgerton, "Epic Triṣṭubh," 162.
3. Edgerton, "Epic Triṣṭubh," 162.
4. Edgerton, "Epic Triṣṭubh," 167. Edgerton's historical references go back to Edwin Arnold's comprehensive book *Vedic Meter*. Those interested in following the trail back into Vedic versification must now study van Nooten and Holland's metrically restored *Ṛg Veda* (Barend A. van Nooten and Gary B. Holland, *Rig Veda: A Metrically Restored Text with an Introduction and Notes*). Of Arnold's restorations of the *Ṛg Veda*, van Nooten and Holland write, "Arnold's work has never received an adequate critique" (xii).
5. I say this because of the great similarity between the Virāṭa type of triṣṭubh and the classical Sanskrit triṣṭubh on the one hand, and the general similarity between the Sabhā types and Vedic triṣṭubhs on the other hand. Obviously the examination of versification patterns alone tells us nothing about relative chronology; but the fact that these different epic patterns do correspond to patterns in broadly datable textual corpora outside the *MBh* is an undeniable indication of relative chronology. But at the same time, the relative chronology of different types of versification is not, by itself, a conclusive indication of the relative age of texts or passages composed in these styles of versification. While it is not likely that an author would employ radically different standards of versification at the same time, it is conceivable that different contemporaneous authors might employ, or realize, substantially different styles, and that examples of their versification might end up side by side in the same text.

to refer to the non-upajāti types of triṣṭubh found in the epic, as well as "mixed triṣṭubhs" to describe passages in which upajāti and "non-regular" triṣṭubhs occur together.

On the basis of certain passages that occur in Books 11 and 12 of the *MBh*, I distinguish a further subtype within the non-regular type of triṣṭubhs, a type I refer to as "proto-śālinī." This type has some degree of uniformity in the metrical pattern in a stanza or across several stanzas, that pattern being a close approximation of the classical triṣṭubh pattern known as śālinī. The rigid classical śālinī pattern is this: – – – – | – ⏑ – – ⏑ – – (it regularly has the caesura after the fourth syllable). At 12.20.10–14, we find an interesting passage: the final stanza would be a perfect, classical śālinī stanza were it not that the first syllable of the first verse is light.[6] The preceding stanzas tend toward this pattern very strongly: stanza ten is farthest away from fourteen's virtual uniformity, and eleven, twelve, and thirteen move closer to fourteen's regularity. One of the characteristics of the proto-śālinī triṣṭubh is that, like so much of the triṣṭubh versification in the *MBh*, the initial syllable remains quite free and may be short or long. Another characteristic of these stanzas is a propensity toward the non-upajāti opening of – – –. And related to this feature is the fact that one of the major deviations from the classical śālinī form in runs of epic proto-śālinī verses is a small difference in the break, such that instead of the śālinī – ⏑ – we have ⏑ ⏑ –, which is the break characteristic of the classical vātormī triṣṭubh, which is obviously closely related to the śālinī. There are other less regular deviations from the classical śālinī in the epic proto-śālinī (in 12.20.10–14 there is one submetric line, 11b; the first verse is mixed upajāti–proto-śālinī; and two verses, 12d and 13a, have the typical upajāti opening – ⏑ – immediately prior to a vātormī break and a śālinī break, respectively). The dominance of a pattern clearly anticipating the classical śālinī metrical pattern seems sufficient warrant to distinguish a particular subtype within Edgerton's Sabhā type, Smith's non-regular type, of triṣṭubhs. Distinguishing a separate subtype seems validated by the reoccurrence of a similar stanza run at 12.25.24–33, and the single verse 11.26.5 exemplifies the same proto-śālinī pattern. Comparing the frequencies of light and heavy syllables at certain positions of the line provides further confirmation. In sixty-one verses in the sixteen stanzas indicated just above (leaving out of consideration one submetric and two hypermetric verses and the two verses, 12.20.10a and 10d, that are of the upajāti type), the frequency of heavy syllables in position three of the line is 92 percent (54 of 59), whereas for the 193 Sabhā-type pādas Edgerton studied, the percentage of heavy syllables at position three in the line was only 58 percent (111 of 193). In Edgerton's sample the fifth syllable was

6. *hariścandraḥ pārthivendraḥ śrutas te yajñair iṣṭvā puṇyakṛd vītaśokaḥ ṛddhyā śakraṃ yo 'jayan mānuṣaḥ saṃs tasmād yajñe sarvam evopayojyam* // 12.20.14.

short 42 percent of the time (81 of 193), but in the sample described in this volume the fifth syllable is short only 15 percent of the time (9 of 59). And while Edgerton's sample has a heavy syllable in position seven 74 percent of the time (142 of 193), my sample has the seventh syllable heavy 100 percent of the time (59 of 59). The samples are small, but the type I am calling proto-śālinī seems to stand out very clearly from Edgerton's description of the Sabhā type in general.

In Table A6.1 the column headed "Designations" shows the labels I employ to describe triṣṭubhs in the footnotes of the translation.

Table A6.1. Classes of Triṣṭubhs Distinguished in Books Eleven and Twelve

Edgerton's Typology	Designations I Employ	Metric Pattern	Other Traits
Virāṭa type	Classical, or, regular, upajāti	× – ⏑ – – | ⏑ ⏑ – ⏑ – ×	Segregation of jagatīs; no hypermetric or submetric verses
	Proto-śālinī, Proto-vātormī	× – – – | × ⏑ – – ⏑ – × Fifth is prevailingly long; third is sometimes short.	Segregation of jagatīs; occasional hypermeters meters and hypometers
Sabhā type	Irregular	× – × – × ⏑ × – ⏑ – ×	Occasional hypermeters and hypometers; jagatīs mingled
	Mixed upajāti and irregular		Occasional hypermeters and hypometers; jagatīs mingled

Appendix 7: Notes on the Format and Apparatus of the Translation

The majority of educated Western readers are familiar with the complex format of the Bible and the editorial conventions employed to present its books; they can find their way around in it with intuitive ease and quote it "chapter and verse." The *Mahābhārata* is equally complex, but it is unfamiliar to most readers, and it requires some study to get acquainted with its layout and to become comfortable with the conventions initiated by van Buitenen to present it in this series. These notes are a brief restatement of the basics of the *Mahābhārata's* layout, the conventions used in this series, and the small differences between what van Buitenen did and what I have done. I have maintained van Buitenen's basic formatting conventions because they are excellent and eminently useful,[1] though I do handle some things a little differently,[2] and I use some of his conventions slightly differently.[3]

The Layout of the *Mahābhārata*

I can do no better than to start by quoting what van Buitenen wrote in the introduction to the first volume of this series under the heading

1. For example, the summaries which precede the translated text and the use of brief footnotes as well as endnotes.
2. For example, I have introduced a layer of segmentation into the long text (128 chapters) of *The Laws for Kings*, the first formal section of Book 12 of the *Mahābhārata* and the eighty-fourth *upaparvan* of the *Mahābhārata*. See the Table of Contents for Book 12.
3. Van Buitenen used indented formatting to offset triṣṭubh stanzas of the text, and he translated these stanzas with verse. I similarly offset triṣṭubhs, other verse forms, quoted material, and other passages that distinguish themselves from their context in one way or another. But I translate none of this material, not even the triṣṭubhs, with verse. I use English prose for all parts of the translation.

"Apparatus," with slight adaptations of the examples so that they point to the current volume.

To facilitate the use of the translation, a number of devices have been employed, the more important ones of them being the divisions of the text into smaller parts.

The traditional division is by Book, Chapter, and Verse. A *Book* here is one of the eighteen *Books (parvan)* into which The *Mahābhārata* is primarily divided. A *Chapter (adhyāya)* is a subsection of a *Book;* a *Verse* (śloka) the couplet[4] in such a *Chapter.* This is our basic notation: *MBh* 1.2.3 refers to the third couplet of the second chapter of the first book.

There is another traditional division that divides the text into one hundred parts, counting many of the component stories. This is a useful division and has been adopted. If we call the *Eighteen Books* the *Major Books,* we may call the *One Hundred Books* the *Minor Books.* The location and sequence of such a Minor Book is indicated by the number of the Major Book in which it occurs, e.g., *MBh* 11, with the number of the Minor Book in the sequence 1–100 given within parentheses. Thus *MBh* 11(80) refers to the eightieth Minor Book, *The Dispelling of Grief,* which happens to occur in *MBh* 11, *The Book of the Women.*[5]

Volume 7 of the *Mahābhārata* translation contains the whole of Major Book 11, *The Book of the Women,* which consists of four Minor Books (numbers 80 through 83), and two of the three large Minor Books that make up Major Book 12, *The Book of Peace* (Minor Books 84 and 85, *The Laws for Kings* and *Law in Times of Distress,* respectively). Volume 8 of the series will contain the third Minor Book of Major Book 12, *The Laws for Gaining Absolute Freedom.*

Minor Books can be quite long, and other narratives may be embedded in them. *MBh* 11(80) has one such narrative; such episodes are indicated by (a), (b), etc., in order of sequence. *MBh* 11(80a) refers to "Vidura's 'Way of Understanding' and the 'Mystery of Rebirth,' a subordinate narrative (a) in *The Dispelling of (Dhṛtarāṣṭra's) Grief* (80),

4. I now avoid this term *couplet* in favor of *stanza.* The epic anuṣṭubh or śloka seems like a "couplet" and is often so called because it is made up of two sixteen-syllable "verses" (the "half-śloka," *ardhaśloka*), each of which is regulated by the same metrical stipulations. But the half-śloka itself developed from the pairing of two, originally metrically equivalent eight-syllable lines, and is thus a kind of couplet itself. As the epic śloka is in some sense a couplet of couplets, though in no sense a quatrain, I prefer to avoid the term couplet altogether and use the term stanza to refer to a set of "verses" that make up a distinct textual unit. In epic practice a *śloka* is usually a stanza of two verses, though there are numerous examples made up of three verses. The historical fact that the epic anuṣṭubh grew out of a quatrain of four eight-syllable verses asserts itself in the standard Sanskrit terminology for the analysis and discussion of parts of stanzas; the term *pāda,* "quarter," is generally used to refer to the eight-syllable units that make up the anuṣṭubh stanza. The same term is used even when referring to a śloka that consists of three "half-ślokas," that is six pādas.

5. van Buitenen, *The Mahābhārata,* 1: xlii.

in *MBh* 11, *The Book of the Women.* At times the (a) class of episodes contains subsidiary stories, which are indicated by (i), (ii), etc. A glance at the Table of Contents of *The Book of the Women* will make the organization immediately clear.

The primary division of *Book, Chapter,* and *Verse* is noted in the translation as follows. A major *Book* will have its own title page. The beginning of a *Chapter* is indicated by a line space and the number in the margin. The first, fifth, tenth, fifteenth, etc., verses are indicated in the margin by 1, 5, 10, 15, etc.

Of additional aid are the *Summaries.* A Major Book is in the translation preceded by its summary, which in that case is simply the table of its component Minor Books. A Minor Book is more fully summarized; but if it contains a subsidiary episode, this is simply noted by its title, and the episode itself summarized immediately preceding it. The *Summaries* show the numbers of the *Chapters* the text contains in the critical edition, with the corresponding number of the *Chapter* in the Bombay edition, and the number of the first *Verse* in the Calcutta edition (which happens not to note chapters). . . . The most precise determination of a passage in the *Summaries* is the parenthesized *Verse* number. The number referred to will be 1, 5, 10, 15, etc.; refinement beyond that seemed unnecessary. If the notation is (5), the incident may occur in any line or all lines of five through nine; if (10), in ten through 14, etc.[6]

In my judgment, the summaries in van Buitenen's volumes are a highly useful tool for studying the narrative outlines of a book, refreshing one's memory, finding a specific detail, and so on. I now see these summaries as an essential component of the work, and I have endeavored to make them a formally reliable guide to the contents of the chapters they summarize. Of course, different kinds of material (e.g., contentious arguments, sermons, stories) dictate different sorts of synopses. But in summarizing chapters I have always tried to include every significant theme or point that is raised in the chapter, judging "significance" variously, according to the specific context. The result is that my summaries are more extensive than van Buitenen's, though I have tried to stifle any impulses to be copious.

What I have said about the importance of van Buitenen's summaries has led me to another extension of van Buitenen's policies in the case of 12(84), *The Laws for Kings.* The three Minor Books that make up Major Book Twelve, *The Book of Peace,* are all relatively large: 12(84), *The Laws for Kings,* contains 128 chapters; 12(85), *Law in Times of Distress,* contains 40; and 12(86), *The Laws for Gaining Absolute Freedom* contains 186 chapters. To facilitate reading these books and studying the anthologies they

6. van Buitenen, *The Mahābhārata,* 1: xlii–xliii.

contain, I have subdivided each of them systematically. In the case of *The Laws for Gaining Absolute Freedom* I was able to rely upon the manuscript tradition for clear indications of several multichapter, subordinate texts. These subordinate texts are listed in the summary for the entire Minor Book in the usual manner of such subordinate stories at the level of (a), (b), (c), and so on, and their summaries immediately precede their translation in the body of the text. All that is unusual here is the large number of such subordinate texts (nineteen). *Law in Times of Distress*, presents a similar case. *The Laws for Kings*, however, does not contain a large number of multichapter, subordinate texts, or any other kind of multichapter segmentation distinguished in the manuscript tradition. Still, the 128 chapters of the Minor Book 12 (84), *The Law for Kings*, do fall naturally into two parts: (1) The narrative of the persuasion of Yudhiṣṭhira to accept the Bhārata kingship, which is followed by the Pāṇḍavas' triumphant entry into Hāstinapura and their settling in there; and (2) the beginning of Bhīṣma's instruction of Yudhiṣṭhira in various aspects of dharma. Furthermore each of these two parts of *The Laws for Kings* may be meaningfully subdivided into clear phases of the narrative, or clear, thematically united, groupings of instructional texts. So I have segmented the text into these subordinate components on the basis of my own perception of the boundaries within it, and I treat the resulting components as "subordinate texts" at van Buitenen's (a), (b), (c), level. I believe this editorial intrusion will justify itself by the facility it affords those who wish to study this part of the text.

> Finally, the translation is annotated. There are two types of notes, footnotes and the more detailed annotations at the end of the translation. The footnotes are no more than simple aids to the reading and serve in particular to identify proper names. For example, Guḍākeśa will be footnoted "= Arjuna" the first few times the name occurs. The final notes present further information on a possible question, elucidate what might be obscure in the body of the text, add philological asides where they are in order, and at times confessions of my own puzzlement.[7]

I have employed and somewhat extended both kinds of notes. I occasionally use the footnotes to impart bits of information besides proper names, such as pointing out what is salient in a reference to some plant species (e.g., the reference to *Erythrina indica* at 11.11.19), or explaining a factual reference or assumption made by the text that is necessary to understand the text (e.g., the explanation of "Aśvatthāman's deed" at 11.1.3). The purpose of the footnotes is to make the comprehension of the sprawlingly complicated text less laborious for those unfamiliar with it. I have also been somewhat fuller than van Buitenen in the annotations

7. van Buitenen, *The Mahābhārata*, 1: xliii.

appended to the text, though not nearly as copious as the translators of the *Rāmāyaṇa* have been.[8] I have offered more annotation than van Buitenen did in part because his three volumes make a large portion of the text accessible to a wider range of general discussion than was the case before his volumes existed. In a significant departure from van Buitenen's volumes, I have put a small mark (°) in the main text to indicate any passage that is discussed in an endnote annotation. I have often felt the need for such a signal when using the earlier volumes, and a number of scholars have expressed to me a desire to have such a siglum. The notes are clearly demarcated in terms of the Minor Book names and chapter numbers. I have departed from van Buitenen's form for the endnotes in two ways that derive from the greater extent of the notes in this volume: (1) The notes are keyed to the actual verse numbers of the Sanskrit text, rather than to the 5, 10, 15, . . . series that occurs in the margins of the translation. Most annotations are preceded by a lemma taken directly from the translation to facilitate coordinating the annotations with the relevant passage in the translation. (2) Some of the notes have been labeled "technical" or "textual," because they treat issues of the Sanskrit language or the Sanskrit text of the *Mahābhārata* that are not aimed at general readers. While I have made these changes in the style and substance of the annotations, I share van Buitenen's qualms about the footnotes and the endnotes:

> The style of the notes and what to include in them proved to be a difficult problem: how far should the translator go in his explanations? There are points about which complete essays may be written, which of course was out of the question. On the other hand, repetition threatens continually. . . . I have tried to give what I think is a helpful answer or the beginning of one to questions, hoping, but not very confidently, that this may satisfy the reader for the time being. It was obviously impossible to anticipate all the questions; it is also obvious that I myself am incompetent to answer all of them. For some, then, I will not have gone far enough; for others I will be painfully redundant; still others will find me oddly eclectic.[9]

The Layout of the Text

I use English prose to translate everything in the Sanskrit text—the anuṣṭubh stanzas (68,858 of which make up 93.3 percent of the

8. *The Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki: An Epic of Ancient India*, Robert P. Goldman, general editor; five volumes of seven projected have been published. Translators of the volumes published: vol. 1, Robert P. Goldman; vols. 2 and 3, Sheldon I. Pollock; vol. 4, Rosalind Lefeber; vol. 5, Robert P. Goldman and Sally Sutherland Goldman.
9. van Buitenen, *The Mahābhārata*, 1: xliii.

Mahābhārata), the triṣṭubh stanzas (4,426 of which make up another 6.0 percent of the text), and the relatively few passages in fancier meters or prose (both of which together comprise 537 textual units across the whole of the epic).[10] Van Buitenen set the triṣṭubh stanzas of the text off from his prose translation of the anuṣṭubhs with indentation, and he translated the triṣṭubhs of the *MBh* with blank verse. Though I have not followed his practice of versifying my translation of the triṣṭubh passages, I too set them off from the anuṣṭubh text. I have done the same with other unusual verse forms, and for all such non-anuṣṭubh verse forms, I give the metric classification in the footnotes, so those interested in tracking these formal matters can do so with ease. I have also used indentation to set off some textual segments on grounds other than metrical difference. I set off passages that are obvious quotations from some source beyond the current speaker, and I set off passages that define themselves as a distinct segment of text by some recurrent feature such as a repeated refrain. Finally, while I follow van Buitenen's practice of presenting his prose translation of anuṣṭubhs in paragraphs, I do sometimes break the text out into paragraphs that translate only one anuṣṭubh śloka per paragraph when I perceive only a broad topical continuity among the ślokas, without the clear progression of a narrative, an argument, a description, or a discussion.

Quotation Marks in the Translation

All chapters *(adhyāyas)* of the Sanskrit text begin with a "prose speech marker" such as *Bhīṣma said:* and all such formulas are given in the translation where they occur in the Pune text. Such prose speech markers also occur sometimes amidst the verses within a chapter, indicating a change in the speaker. Often, however, the speaker may change within a chapter, and no prose speech marker occurs in the text to indicate it. I then use quotation marks to mark the change of voice. Quotation marks surround all text that is to be attributed to a speaker different from the speaker noted by the last prose formula. Quotation marks end with the end of that spoken passage. The reason for noting this obvious practice is the fact that the *Mahābhārata* is not formally uniform about such things. For example, a chapter may begin with a prose formula indicating Bhīṣma is speaking. Within his own speech Bhīṣma may quote a speech made by someone else, say Nārada. If Nārada's speech is marked in the text by a prose formula (*Nārada said:*), then I do not use quotation marks to indicate Nārada's speech. But if it is not preceded in the Sanskrit by such a prose

10. These numbers come from my own computer-aided study of all non-anuṣṭubh elements of the *MBh* (based on the electronic text of John D. Smith).

formula, then I do surround it with quotation marks. Within his speech Nārada may quote someone else, or report a dialogue. Again, if there is no prose formula marking the new speaker, I use quotation marks (alternating double and single quotes to distinguish each nested layer of speech) to mark the utterance of that new speaker.[11] But it is not uncommon for the new quotation to be marked by a prose formula. In that case, I close the quotes marking Nārada's speech, and, because the quoted person's speech is now explicitly indicated in the text, I use no quotes for that speech. Typically, when the speaker quoted by Nārada, for example, once again, is finished and Nārada is again the speaker, that transition is marked by a prose formula indicating that the speaker is once again Nārada.

Let me mention in this connection the fact that, in some types of dialectical context, at times, I postulate a change of speaker on the sole basis of my interpretation of the sense of the passage. Some statements are so discontinuous with the preceding that I take them to be objections or rebuttals from a new voice, either actual or imagined. I enclose the words of these putative speakers in quotation marks as well. An interesting instance of this occurs in Chapter 12.17, which, I believe, represents an inner dialogue in Yudhiṣṭhira's mind.

The Use of Indented Passages in the Translation

I set off some passages with indentation to mark different kinds of discontinuity in the flow of the text. Verses handed down in tradition which are quoted are set off, as are portions of the text that occur in triṣṭubh meter. Also indented are verses or runs of verses that stand off from their context by virtue of a recurrent refrain, or because they give some kind of specially formed list. My reason for breaking the translation up in this way is to facilitate the sometimes difficult task of following the flow of a speech or an argument. As I noted earlier, in the introduction, much of the *Mahābhārata* needs to be seen as a series of speeches, and this is another way of saying that a significant part of the message to be conveyed was indicated by tone of voice, facial expression, gesture, and bodily movements generally. Much information about the flow of verses and their interconnections, information required to understand what was said completely, is not registered in the written record of the oral text. The transposition of such an oral text to writing is a kind of dehydration of the text, and its subsequent translation from the Sanskrit written form into a language, here English, which takes the written form for granted, creates

11. I use such quotation marks even around material that has been indented, such as traditionally quoted verses, or triṣṭubhs; see the next section below.

not only a necessarily unsatisfactory reconstitution of the text, but almost erases the memory of the text's original embodiment. The text's original embodiment does survive in many of the difficulties we have in following the continuity of the text, and my setting off portions of the text is one limited method I use to indicate transitions in the text, alterations of point of view, and so forth.

Notes

Preliminary Note

These notes are more copious than those of van Buitenen in the first three volumes of this translation, but they are still presented only as a general supplement to the translation, providing clarifications, details, reservations about the translation, textual notes, and so forth. Some of these notes provide very general information for readers unfamiliar with India, and some are written for Sanskritists, but most aim between these two extremes to provide fine-grained information about a particular passage, or its language, or its connection to other themes or episodes of the *MBh.* The *MBh,* particularly in the much improved text of the Pune edition, presents numerous difficulties of language and interpretation. General readers and scholars alike should have some sense of these issues and how I have addressed them.

The existence of an endnote annotation for a given passage in the translation is usually signaled in the translation by the degree symbol (°) affixed to some part of the concerned passage. Some endnotes and various different Text Notes are signaled from the footnotes in the translation. In the endnotes, the passage being commented upon is linked to the translated text by the exact chapter and stanza references of the Pune edition (this is a departure from van Buitenen's practice), even though the translation itself labels only every fifth stanza. Almost all the annotations are preceded by a quotation of some or all of the pertinent passage of the translation in order to facilitate connecting the note to the passage. These aids should make it easy for readers to locate the endnotes relevant to any passage in the text. The quoted text is frequently followed by the Sanskrit text of the sentence referred to by the quotation, or by a key phrase or word from that sentence. Sometimes the initial quotation in the note is followed

by my giving the Sanskrit word (cited in its stem form) which has been translated by the quoted English phrase.

I have not followed van Buitenen's practice of completely mirroring the segmentation of the translated text (*upaparvan* titles and subsections of *upaparvans*) in the notes. *Parvan* and *upaparvan* titles are shown here, but lower-level text segments are ignored in the notes. Some notes that may not be preceded by a quoted passage from the text refer instead to stanza "0" of a chapter; these are preliminary comments on an entire chapter. The presence of such a note is signaled by the degree symbol (°) after the first two or three words in that chapter. Some discussions of Sanskrit words, phrases, and verse-pādas require specific reference to the "quarters" of the stanza (e.g., "149.84ab"). Such references are useful only to those with access to the Sanskrit text, and generally they are omitted, unless I felt some need for that level of specificity. Sometimes a given stanza carries more than one note. In such cases the references to that stanza are further distinguished by adding "(1)," "(2)," and "(3)," as necessary: for example, the three notes 1.22 (1), 1.22 (2), and 1.22 (3) to stanza 22 of the first chapter).

Finally, some discussions are purely technical and directed only at scholars who work with the Sanskrit text of the *MBh.* I have preceded those discussions with the label **"Technical Note"** in bold type. Relatively few notes are so labeled, because, while most of the notes refer to Sanskrit words and expressions, few of them depend exclusively for their value on knowing Sanskrit.

Book 11: The Book of the Women

11(80) The Dispelling of Grief

1.6. *You help nothing when you grieve: nāsti śoke sahāyatā.* A terse statement that is not perfectly clear on its face. Literally it says, "in grief there is no assistance (or companionship)," and I take it to mean that when a person grieves, that person does no good for anyone or anything else. Saṃjaya next points out to Dhṛtarāṣṭra two aspects of the situation that would benefit by the king's attention: First, the Earth, the king's figurative and ritual wife (he was referred to—significantly, in this instance—as "lord of earth" just above), is lonesome (and in need of *sahāyatā*, "companionship") in the wake of the slaughter, and second, there are many funerals to take care of.

1.13. *my friends:* I translate here the corrected text that the editor V. G. Paranjpe specifies in the *corrigenda* on page vii of the edition. Paranjpe changed his mind about the reading here after the text was printed (changing *suhṛdo* to *suhṛdām*). Anyone consulting the Sanskrit text of this or any part of the Pune edition should first enter all the corrections specified in the *corrigenda* appended to each volume. There are a few typographical errors as well, and I have noted these where I have detected them.

1.16. *bellowing like a bull: vṛṣabhasyeva nardataḥ.* A reference to Duryodhana's roaring defiance and rage after the Pāṇḍavas located him hiding in the lake. See *MBh* 9.31.48b, 32.1a, and

55.6b. The verse referring to Duryodhana (16ab) seems to have been inserted ahead of what must have originally been a reference only to Duḥśāsana, Karṇa, and Droṇa. The syntax is a little rough and depends upon what might be called "anticipatory *anuvṛtti.*"

1.19. *the operation of fate: daivayogāt.* The word *daiva* is typically translated as "fate" or "destiny" in contexts where the cause of a happening is a salient issue, and I think those words are basically adequate. But in general in the *MBh, daiva* (an adjective derived from the old words for "God" [*deva*] and the "sky" or "heavens[s]" [*dyu/div*], which can refer to any kind of "supernatural" occurrence) refers to any "celestial" or "divine" agency that is beyond human power and understanding—the intervention of Gods, fate, or, as the commentator Arjunamiśra says at *MBh* 12.56.14–15, preexisting karma. The opposite of *daiva* is *puruṣakāra,* "what is done by a man," the "human contribution" in what occurs. See *HDhŚ,* 3: 168 ff. A recent article by Walter Slaje ("*nāsti daive prabhutvam:* Traces of Demythologisation in Indian Epic Thought") translates and comments upon *MBh* 13.6, a text that discusses *daiva* and related ideas. This article has a small but excellent bibliography of other pertinent works.

1.20 (1). *doing vows: saṃśitavrata.* The Sanskrit word *vrata* refers to many specific, usually delimited, observances that pious people incorporate into their lives for some particular religious purpose—fasts or dietary restrictions, pilgrimages and visits to temples, periods of celibacy, devotions, prayer-recitations, and so forth, as well as the deliberate infliction of intense suffering on the bodily limbs *(tapas).* These observances are more akin to the voluntary Lenten observances of some Christians than to "vows," as that word is generally limited today to solemn, usually public and formal promises (typically, "marriage vows," or the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience taken by members of Roman Catholic religious orders). Dhṛtarāṣṭra is referring to the particular restrictions—such as the fasting, sleeping on the ground, reciting litanies, and donning animal skins mentioned at *MBh* 15.5.10–12—which he will observe as part of making his exit from this life.

1.20 (2). *that long road to the heavenly world of Brahmā:* Dhṛtarāṣṭra feels sorry for himself and engages in a fantasy of passive aggression toward the Pāṇḍavas. He is referring here to retiring to the forest for penance and meditation, and possibly ending his life by undertaking the "Great Journey" (the *mahāprasthāna*), a journey of suicide on which one walks until he or she drops of exhaustion and lack of nourishment. His mentioning the Pāṇḍavas' having to see him undertake terminal vows is an allusion to the Pāṇḍavas,' especially Yudhiṣṭhira's, sensitivity to their "father" and his sufferings (see, for example, *MBh* 11.8.40 ["If Yudhiṣṭhira . . . knew that you were tormented with grief, . . . he would give up even his life."] and 15.5.10–11).

For a brief discussion of some of the brahmin tradition's views of suicide, see *HDhŚ,* 2: 924–28. A basic text of Dharmaśāstra allowing it, at least under some circumstances (for forest ascetics), is Manu 6.31, which reads as follows:

> *aparājitāṃ vāsthāya vrajed diśam ajihmagaḥ /*
> *ā nipātāt śarīrasya yukto vāryanilāśanaḥ //*
> Or, keeping his mind intently focused and consuming only wind and water, one can travel in a straight line to the northeast until his body falls down.

The five Pāṇḍavas and Draupadī set out on a form of the Great Journey at the end of the entire *MBh* story (see *MBh* 17.1.2–5 and 17.1.18–44), and all but Yudhiṣṭhira dropped dead along the way. As for Dhṛtarāṣṭra, he lived at Hāstinapura for fifteen years after the war as the titular king. Then he, Gāndhārī, and Kuntī spent their last three years living by ascetic vows in the forest (see *MBh* chapters 15.5–21 for the narrative of the preparations for their departure and 15.22–26 for a description of their entering the forest and establishing themselves there). Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Gāndhārī, and Kuntī died there in a forest fire which their penances had made them too weak to flee (*MBh* 15.45.10–38). Stanzas 24–27 of that passage contain a brief exchange between Dhṛtarāṣṭra and Saṃjaya, the point of which is that for ascetics "Water, fire, wind and starvation are recommended" as modes of "not-inappropriate death" (*na . . . mṛtyur aniṣṭaḥ*). The mention of "wind" is a reference to throwing oneself from a cliff, a standard method of suicide referred to in later legal literature as *bhṛguprapatana,* "plunging from a precipice." A presentation on expiation at *MBh* 12.36.14 commends different forms of suicide as a means of being purified from all one's evil deeds. The drinking

of scalding liquids prescribed at *MBh* 12.36.13 (and more fully at Manu 11.90–91) seem also to be recommendations of self-killing rather than externally imposed punishment. So too 12.36.18ab, where the word *vimokṣaṇa* seems better taken to mean actively "discharging" the body, rather than simply "escaping" it.

1.21. *sifting through his many sorrows: bahuśokaṃ vicinvataḥ.* The present active participle *vicinvataḥ* ("sifting") describes a process in which an agent takes apart some aggregation, inspecting its components; see William Dwight Whitney, *The Roots, Verb-Forms, and Primary Derivatives of the Sanskrit Language*, 46–47. Such sifting of his sorrows is a recurring trait of Dhṛtarāṣṭra's in the *MBh*, most notably and movingly in his "When I heard . . ." dirge, which is recited at the very beginning of the entire *MBh* (see *MBh* 1.1.102–46, van Buitenen, 1: 24–28).

1.22 (1). *King. . . . Most excellent king . . . :* I take both of these vocative expressions as addressed by Saṃjaya to Dhṛtarāṣṭra. However, the second one is, in principle, ambiguous, as it could conceivably be Vaiśaṃpāyana's addressing his audience, King Janamejaya. Generally, I take such vocatives as "active" within the most proximate context of address possible. Thus, both vocatives here can easily be referred to Dhṛtarāṣṭra, while at 11.1.37 below, "O you burner of your enemies" must be Vaiśaṃpāyana addressing Janamejaya.

1.22 (2). *settled teachings of the Vedas: vedaniścayāḥ.* A *niścaya* is a conclusion or determination reached after a sifting through much evidence and various alternatives. The verbal root in this noun is akin to that in the participle *vicinvataḥ* in the previous verse. The Vedas were the preferred source for normative knowledge; however, they are extensive and complex, and only through such careful, sifting research can reliable knowledge (in the form of a *niścaya*, where what is known is *niścita*, "settled, determined, 'pinned down,' arrived at with certainty") be reached.

1.22 (3). *[When Sṛñjaya] was pained with grief for his son:* This is a reference to a famous dirge, "The Passing on of the Sixteen Kings," recited by the seer Nārada to King Sṛñjaya, who mourned the death of his young son. All the manuscript traditions of the *MBh*, with the exception of those of Kaśmīr, have two renditions of the recital, one that Vyāsa repeated to Yudhiṣṭhira when he had recently learned of the slaughter of Abhimanyu (*MBh* B. 7.55–71, with Nārada's account starting at 7.55.36cd: *MBh* 7, App. 1, no. 8 in the Pune edition), and another that Kṛṣṇa repeated to Yudhiṣṭhira when, before he agreed to accept the kingship, and lamenting Abhimanyu's death in particular, he had vowed he would fast to death (see *MBh* 12.27.22–25; Kṛṣṇa addresses him at 12.29.8, and the repetition of Nārada's account begins at 12.29.12). Basically, because the Kaśmīrī manuscripts do not contain the rendition of the seventh book, the critical edition does not include it in the constituted text. But here at 11.1.22 Saṃjaya is clearly referring to Dhṛtarāṣṭra's having previously heard him, Saṃjaya, repeat Vyāsa's rendition of Nārada's dirge. All manuscript traditions contain Saṃjaya's reference to this recital, even though not all of the manuscript traditions contain the account referred to. Such inconsistencies remain to entertain the minds of those interested in the history of the *MBh* text.

1.24 (1). Technical Note: *your son's:* I take *tava*, "yours," as an abbreviated form of *tava (te) putrasya*, "of your son."

1.24 (2). Technical Note: *Śalya, that thorn in the side of the whole world! śalyaś ca yena sarvaṃ śalyabhūtaṃ kṛtaṃ jagat.* I take *śalyabhūtaṃ* to be the equivalent of *saśalyam;* the BR gloss of *bhūta "verbunden, gemischt mit"* (connected to, mixed with).

1.25. *the elder of the Kurus: Kuruvṛddha.* An occasional designation for Bhīṣma in the *MBh*. It refers to Dhṛtarāṣṭra once at *MBh* 5.23.7. It does not refer to Bāhlika, the brother of Bhīṣma's father, who was in fact the eldest of the Kurus, but whose presence in the Kuru councils was represented inconsistently.

1.28. This generalization echoes Saṃjaya's sharper reproach of Dhṛtarāṣṭra at 7.90.4: "This tremendous and vast destruction has come upon you from your own wrong-doing. In fact it appears you never did anything right, Bhārata—not at the outset, nor in the middle, nor afterwards. Really, this debacle has you for its root!"

1.31. *Royal Splendor: na . . . śocañ śriyam āpnoti.* The word *śrī* basically signifies "manifest opulence or splendor" that makes one eminent. Such splendor comes, in some contexts, to be one of the legitimating attributes of rule and kingship. It is not clear that the royal value

of the term is relevant here, but I chose to intone it because it makes a better juxtaposition with "the Ultimate" (*param*) than does "opulence" alone. At times *śrī* is conceived of anthropomorphically as a Goddess, Śrī, who is the consort, or wife, sometimes of Indra, later of Viṣṇu. For an excellent discussion of the word *śrī* and the concepts it represented in Vedic and post-Vedic texts, see Jan Gonda, *Aspects of Early Viṣṇuism*, 176–231. A set of sermons in the *The Laws for Gaining Absolute Freedom* (at 12.215–21), in which the fallen Asuras Prahrāda, Namuci, and Bali preach the enlightened outlook to an unsophisticated Indra, represent this Goddess as having resided with the Asura rulers as long as they were virtuous. But when they degenerated into wickedness, she resolved to leave them and take up residence with Indra. In 12.124 Dhṛtarāṣṭra repeated one of these histories (the instance involving Prahrāda) to Duryodhana when he felt humiliated by the Splendor of Yudhiṣṭhira's Royal Consecration.

1.36–37. *insight and understanding: buddhyā* and *buddhipūrvam.* I do not commonly use compound or paraphrasing translations of nouns. I have done so here with the first two instances of buddhi to give the theme of "understanding" as it is used here a more specific nuance. This use of the word *buddhi* ("understanding, insight; mind, intelligence"; it is also a technical term in Sāṃkhya enumerations of psychic faculties, where I typically render it with "[Higher] Mind") represents one of the major philosophical themes explicit in the *MBh*—relying upon insight into or understanding of the deeper structure of what appears in the world experienced through the senses in order to escape pain (whether the pain of some immediate disappointment or loss, or the general suffering of existence in the cycle of rebirths). "Figuring things out," captures some of its sense. (The words *prajñā, jñāna, vijñāna*, and *vidyā* are sometimes used to express this theme, though expressing this particular theme is not the primary work of any of these words). This theme occurs several other times in the current episode (at 2.21, 7.15, 8.18, and 8.44); Yudhiṣṭhira uses it in the family argument over renunciation at 12.17.19–20; and it is prominently featured in the first episode of *The Laws for Gaining Absolute Freedom*, the "Song Sung to King Senajit" (when his son had died), at *MBh* 12.168; in Nārada's sermon to Śuka at *MBh* 12.316–18; and in many other speeches (e.g., a perfectly typical use occurs at 12.120.30). This idea is quite different from religious claims of "seeing the unseen," of having "visions" of special things or persons that are not normally seen by all, because it focuses upon revising one's understanding of one's experience, and it is related to explicitly critical attempts to understand how subjects experience what they experience.

2.2. *the final disposition: nirṇaya.* The word *nirṇaya* means concretely "carry off, remove" (as at *MBh* 3.199.16 and 17, where—*pace* van Buitenen, who rendered it with "decided" and "judgment"—it refers to the removal of past karma, and at 4.16.3, where it refers to the removal of suffering) and eventually comes to signify a "resolution or disposition; or a conclusion, determination, or judgment" that disposes of a matter after a crisis (see *MBh* 3.276.2), or an inquiry, or process of reasoning (as at *MBh* 7.90.5, where Saṃjaya refers to "the judgment of the world" that Dhṛtarāṣṭra bears some responsibility for the war and should stop grieving about it). Here at 11.2.2 its basic meaning of "removal" or "disposition" is what is involved.

2.6. *the course that goes the farthest: gatās te paramāṃ gatim.* Concern with the "course" or "way" (*gati*) one will go after death is frequently expressed in the *MBh*. In contexts of warriors fighting and dying, texts frequently speak of one heaven (*loka*) or another as the desired goal, with Indra's heaven, or Brahmā's, being the highest. Those who are most virtuous are imagined as going to the highest abode; those less so do not go quite as far. Look ahead at *MBh* 11.26.12–17 for one specific account along these lines.

2.8. *They came from beyond your sight:* This verse is closely echoed in that first passage of the *The Laws for Gaining Absolute Freedom* mentioned above, the "Song Sung to King Senajit"; see the quotation of it in the note to 11.3.17 below.

2.9. *for us, these are both superbly excellent:* Vidura's use of "us" (*naḥ*) here on a central theme of kṣatriya ethics is interesting. Though he, like Dhṛtarāṣṭra, is nominally the son of Vicitravīrya, his mother was a slave, and he is not a kṣatriya, but a mixed-*varṇa* "steward" (*kṣattṛ*). In addition, his actual father was the brahmin seer Vyāsa. To round out this presentation of Vidura's pedigree, he was also the incarnation of a piece of the God Dharma. See the LCP, s.v. "Vidura."

2.11. *special magical knowledge: vidyā:* This would be knowledge such as that of the mystical fire taught to Naciketas by Yama in the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* at 1.12–19.

2.16. *the misery that is common to all people: jānapadikaṃ duḥkam.* Most strictly, *jānapadika* signifies "proper to the country" [*janapada*, literally, "the seat of a people"]. I stretch the word from "proper to the country" to "countrywide, endemic" to "common to all people," because a basic theme in this context is the universal human condition. This passage overlaps signficantly with Nārada's sermon on universal human suffering to Śuka in 12.317, which shares common themes with the "Senajit sermon" discussed in the note to 12.26.13.

2.19 (1). *No, it does not then leave him, who still has business to complete: na ca nāpaiti kāryārthāt.* An obscure pāda; I am unhappy with my solution for the two negatives, but I can see no way to construe them as a meaningful double negative.

2.19 (2). *and he is deprived of the three kinds of benefit: trivargāc caiva bhraśyate.* Literally, "one falls short of (or, is deprived of) that Group of Three [things one typically seeks to gain through action; Merit (dharma), Profit (or Riches; artha), and (sensual) Pleasure (usually kāma, but here *sukha*)]."

2.23. *In whatever stage of life:* See *MBh* 12.174 for a fuller statement of this theme, 12.174.15 in particular.

3.1. *Really, I do: tattvataḥ.* Typically this word ("truly," "as it really is") refers to the substance or content of a communication or realization. But here Dhṛtarāṣṭra refers only to Vidura's "maxims," or "good sayings" (*subhāṣitāḥ*), and "words," or "statements" (*vākyāni*), so *tattvataḥ* cannot modify the substance communicated; it can refer only to his "wish to hear." Besides numerous ambiguous instances, clear parallels to this usage occur at *MBh*'1.45.18 (where another adverb modifies the communicative substance), *Rām.* 1.30.22, and *Rām.* 2.18.13.

3.4. *no one ever finds any permanent value in it: sāro hy asya na vidyate.* The banana tree, *Musa sapientum*, has no wood, as its "stems are actually formed by the imbricate bases of the petioles" (N. L. Bor, *Manual of Indian Forest Botany*, 336). Thus the banana tree is "a symbol of feebleness, because its stalk is not wood, as it is formed only by the overlapping sheaths of its leaves" (BR, s.v. "*kadala*"). Concretely, the word *sāra* refers to the hard and lasting substance found below the surface of some things (e.g., the wood in trees); hence, it is used abstractly to signify the, or a, main part or essence of something. Vijñāneśvara, commenting on *Yājñavalkyasmṛti* 3.8, glosses *sāra* with *sthira*, "firm, abiding," and gives as its opposite *aciravinaśvara*, "perishing quickly" (Narayan Ram Acharya, ed., *Yājñavalkyasmṛti*).

3.16. *the unfathomable mystery of rebirth: saṃsāragahana.* This particular episode of the *MBh* (*upaparvan* 80, "The Dispelling of Grief") contains a significant proportion of all the uses of the word *saṃsāra* and its cognates in the entire *MBh* (sixteen instances of about eighty). Sometimes the word *saṃsāra* refers to the entire process, or the whole cycle or "round of birth, death, and rebirth," but here, and elsewhere in this sermon of Vidura's, it means basically "the transition to a new birth." Later in his sermon Vidura distinguishes between *saṃsāragahana* ("the mystery of a particular transition to a particular birth") and "great *saṃsāra*" (*mahatsaṃsāra* at 11.5.3a and 11.6.5b), which would seem to be this text's way of referring to the entire process of migrating from one birth to another. At 11.4.6 the word is used to refer explicitly to birth, to the "transition into life."

3.17. *who understand the way beings come together: samāgamajñā bhūtānām.* Beings come together for brief moments as part of a vast series of connections driven by forces that appear unfathomable to humans on their surface. This idea is made clear in the "Song Sung to King Senajit," at *MBh* 12.168.15–17: "As two sticks might drift together upon the great ocean and then, after coming together, drift apart again—that is how creatures associate with each other. So it is with sons, grandsons, kinsmen, and in-laws too. One should have no affection toward them, for separation from them is a certainty. Fallen to you from beyond your sight, he has gone back beyond your sight; he did not know you, nor you him. Who are you? And for whom do you grieve?" The first line of this last stanza (i.e., 12.168.17ab) contains a variant of 11.2.8ab.

4.2. kalala *embryo:* The only other place in the *MBh* where this term occurs is when the female ascetic Sulabhā is lecturing King Janaka upon the phases of human existence at 12.308.116 ff. The *kalala* phase is the first of several embryonic stages she distinguishes there: "The *kalala* embryo arises as the particular structures that develop from the union of blood and semen, 'the depositing of the drops,' and so on occur. From the *kalala* embryo, the *arbuda* embryo is formed; the *peśī* embryo originates from the *arbuda* embryo. Then the limbs develop from the *peśī* embryo, and the nails and the hair from the limbs. King of Mithilā, when the ninth month has been completed, the particular embodiment of the person is produced, 'female' or 'male,' according to its sex mark. When one sees its body just after birth, it is the 'one of coppery-red nails and fingers.' Once it reaches a 'child's' body, it is no longer thought of in terms of bodily form."

4.6 (1). *this passage into rebirth: saṃsāra.* Once again, the meaning here is the actual process of being born.

4.6 (2). *Grabber demons: graha-s* ("the planets," "monsters," "Grabber demons"), agents that have a hold upon a person or seize a person, frequently children (often in the womb), usually inimically. For a list of some of these often grotesque Grabber demons, see *MBh* 3.219.25–44, van Buitenen, 2: 658–59.

4.10. *Since even so little:* As the editor V. G. Paranjpe noted, this is an obscure verse, but I do not agree with Paranjpe's proposed solution. The two lines read as follows:

> *vāgghīnasya ca yanmātram iṣṭāniṣṭaṃ kṛtaṃ mukhe /*
> *bhūya evātmanātmānaṃ badhyamānam upekṣate //*

Completely apart from this stanza, the themes of this passage (2–15) are attachment, deeds, bondage, and awareness (or lack of awareness) of oneself. So I interpret this stanza to be a general reflection upon the process of attachment and bondage that leads one to the abode of death, as described in stanza 8. And I paraphrase its point as follows: "Assent to some parts of experience and rejection of other parts of it (both of which constitute actively participating in the world experienced) are accomplished when one makes but the subtlest of gestures; so it is that one easily succumbs to, or continues, participating in the world experienced without being fully aware of what he or she is doing."

Technical Note: I cannot even begin to discuss all the complexities of interpreting the ambiguous 10ab, but in case it is not fully obvious how I take each element of that verse, I will give my analysis of it. The half-śloka 10ab is a relative clause dependent upon the main clause 10cd. I take *yad* (i.e., *yan*) as a relative adverb introducing an explanation, "as," or "since"; the coordinate "so" that we expect in the main clause is not explicit in 10cd, but such an elision is quite common. I take the subject of 10ab to be *mātram* (*vāgghīnasya mukhe*), "that minimum (in the mouth of a mute)"; or, expanded, "that (or those) minimum [vocal indication(s)] [that commonly occur(s)] in the mouth(s) of (a) mute(s)"—that is, the vocal, but nonverbal, sounds that some people who cannot speak make. I have put this into English with "(even) so little as the sounds made in the mouth of a mute." Of this "minimum," the clause predicates that it is "assent or rejection (done)"; that is, the slightest gesture constitutes one's coming to "own" his actions. In the *dvaṃdva* compound *iṣṭāniṣṭam*, I take each of these past participles to refer not to objects "liked" or "disliked," but rather to instances of "assent" (*tena iṣṭam*, "He approved") or "rejection" (*na tena iṣṭam*, "He did not approve"). Thus I construe *iṣṭāniṣṭaṃ kṛtaṃ* as a predicate phrase saying "assent or rejection is done (i.e., accomplished, effected)." The half-śloka 10cd presents no problem.

4.14. *keeping all the Laws: dharmam anupālayan.* Though dharma here is singular, it refers to the whole collectivity of particular Merit-producing and beneficial practices and norms that would apply to a particular person. The preverb *anu-* (which basically means "along," or "after") often implies successive movement through some kind of serial aggregation or totality. Here it implies a plurality of relevant practices and norms and the person's "adhering" to, or "keeping" to (the idea of the verb root here), in their proper order, all that apply to him.

5.4. *scared him to death:* A slightly idiomatic rendering of *mṛtyor api bhayapradam.*

5.5. *his heart pounded wildly: hṛdayam udvegam agamat.* The Sanskrit is a bit more abstract than my rendering: "his heart became extremely agitated."

5.11. *the webbing of the vine's filaments: latāsaṃtānasaṃkaṭe.* A *saṃkaṭa* is a place "constricted, narrow, densely crowded, or impervious." He is hanging upside down by his foot, which means that his body crashing down through the tangle must have caused some compensatory tightening of part of the tangle of vines around one of his feet.

5.12. *jack-fruit: panasa, Artocarpus heterophyllus,* which has very large, pendulous fruit.

6.2. *in such a dangerous narrowing of his Lawful Works and Merit: dharmasaṃkaṭe.* The term *saṃkaṭa* here has two levels of meaning. First, it is the physical "constriction" of the well's shaft; second, it is the narrowing of the brahmin's ability to perform his duties (which is the same as saying "pile up the prescribed good deeds," or "accumulate Merit"), which is of course dangerous to his fate after death. Among other anxieties that he faces there, his situation constitutes a crisis of "Law," "Right Action," and "Merit." The same compound occurs in essentially the same sense at *MBh* 12.346.8.

6.3. *I will get busy and do what is needed: sādhu ceṣṭāmahe.* Literally, "I will get busy to do 'the right thing.'"

6.5. *the vast round of rebirth: mahatsaṃsāraḥ.* I interpret this as a compound, though we would expect *mahāsaṃsāraḥ*, because of the phrase *mahati saṃsāre* at 11.5.3. Most natural would be to construe the *mahat* with the subject of the first clause (*kāntāram*, "forest") and translate simply "that great forest . . . is the round of rebirth." But I do not think what is most natural here is right.

7.8. *the great wild beasts of their own past deeds: svakarmabhir mahāvyālaiḥ.* The stanza just above glossed *vyāla-s* as diseases, and the stanza immediately following returns to that theme. The current stanza interrupts with this second glossing of *vyāla-s*, so I have framed it with parentheses.

7.12. *the measures of time: kālasya nidhayaḥ.* A *nidhi* is a deposit or accumulation of something (frequently of liquid) in one place, often referring to the ocean; sometimes the word refers to the place of accumulation and means "receptacle." I see the word working here as "accumulations" of time, and there is perhaps some sense that each larger measure is the "receptacle," or accumulation, of the smaller measures. From the earliest phase of Sanskrit, the word *nidhi* often refers to some hoard or treasure of a valuable substance or quality, but I doubt that the author of this phrase meant to suggest anything so positive about time ("Time"). As we have already seen in this text (and there are many similar passages throughout the *MBh*), time usually means decay and death and has no good connotations.

7.13. *soul: sattva.* In the *MBh* this word sometimes has the same meaning as buddhi ("Higher Mind," often translated as "Intellect") in enumerations (*saṃkhyāna*) of the psychic makeup of people. But I take it here in the sense seen above at 11.3.5, in part because the term *buddhi* occurs in this passage alongside *sattva*. I render *buddhi* here as "thoughts" (rather than with its technical, enumerative sense, because this instance does not seem to be a completely developed example of an "enumerative context," and because the word *buddhi* is juxtaposed to "deeds" (*karman*).

7.17. *pangs of regret: anutarṣula,* "longing, or craving" after the fact.

8.19. *Are you going to settle down? kathaṃ sthairyaṃ bhavet tava.* More literally, "How might you be(come) steady?" Vassilkov (personal communication) offers, "How (else) might I make your heart firm." My taking the question as an expression of impatience is slightly speculative, but this sort of exasperation with Dhṛtarāṣṭra is one of the themes of this episode.

8.20. *refreshed: jitaklama.* One of the usual comforts of being in a celestial hall. See the descriptions of the halls of the World Guardians in Book 2 of the *MBh*, van Buitenen, 2: 39–54. Of course this could be construed with the following sentence, in the following half-śloka; enjambment is not unusual in the *MBh*.

8.32–34. *this was all conveyed to you before by Nārada:* This reference is unclear. It cannot refer to the statement of Nārada's reported at *MBh* 2.71.30, for that statement was made only to the Kurus after the dicing match was over and the Pāṇḍavas had departed the assembly hall for the forest. At *MBh* 2.33.11–21, as Yudhiṣṭhira's Royal Consecration was just getting underway, Nārada's musings upon the secret divine agenda at work in terrestrial events—which are closely related to the idea here—are reported, but he says nothing at that time.

8.35. *the breath of life: prāṇāḥ.*

8.39. **Text Amendment.** My printed copy of the Pune text reads "*karmaparo*" in pāda 39a, but I believe that is a typo for "*dharmaparo.*" The latter reading occurs in older printed editions of the *MBh* and is translated by Ganguli, but no variants at all are given in the apparatus of the Pune text for its *karmaparo*. This discrepancy leads me to suspect that Paranjpe in fact read "*dharmaparo*" here, and "*karmaparo*" is a typographical error. If there is a significant manuscript basis for *karmaparo*, then it certainly is the *lectio difficilior;* the only other instance in the *MBh* of a similar compound is *MBh* 6.34.10b (*BhG* 6.12.10b) "*matkarmaparamo bhava*" ("be dedicated to doing my work").

8.46. *driven on by a huge net: mahatā śokajālena praṇunno 'smi.* Dhṛtarāṣṭra offers an *apologia* for having threatened suicide. Most concrete references to nets in the *MBh* are to fishing nets, but the term "driven" here suggests the hunting technique in which the beaters drive an animal within an area that has been surrounded by a continuous band of cloth, thus funneling the animal to one small outlet at the front. This technique is known in modern India. It could well have been used 2,500 years ago. In fact it seems that such a technique lies behind the allegorical description of *saṃsāra* given by Vidura in Chapter 5 of this episode; see in particular the reference to a net (*vāgura*) surrounding the woods at 11.5.8b. On the other hand, Ganguli takes *jāla*, "net," here in the sense of a large mass (he translates the compound "a heavy load of grief"), but in my judgment this is an inappropriate interpretation of *jāla* here. The use of *jāla* to refer to "a multitude" in the *MBh* does not typically refer to a continuous mass of some kind of thing; it always refers to a spatially or otherwise extended "throng" of smaller components (arrows, sun-rays, flowers), frequently an aggregation that forms an interconnected "net," or web, of elements (pearls, gold ornaments, lattices, horse-harnesses with bells attached). In the compound *śokajāla* here, and in the occasional *mohajāla* ("a net of error, or confusion"), the likeness of grief or error to a net is based on function, not form.

8.47. *about what was ordained by fate: vacanam . . . daivaniyogajam.* In agreement with Ganguli, I have translated *-ja* in the sense of "*gehörig zu, in Verbindung stehend mit*" ("belonging or pertaining to, connected with" [BR, s.v. "*ja*," 1e]). Of course Vyāsa's point had been that what happened was produced by fate (*-ja* basically means "born from"), and perhaps the best way to construe the compound here is by postulating an understood *etad* (this), meaning *sarvaṃ vṛttam* (all that happened), as the implicit subject (in indirect discourse: "having heard your statement that everything that happened was produced by the ordinances of fate") of *daivaniyogajam.*

11(81) The Women

9.10 (1). *Having set their lovely tresses free to fly: prakīrya keśān suśubhān.* The verb *pra-√kṝ* means "to scatter, strew, or throw (some things) around." When hair or cloth has been *prakīrṇa*, as here, it means the hair or cloth is free to "flap or wave"; it is not tied down, often as an aspect of personal disarray. Several times in the *MBh* the adjective describes the waving of banners and flags, and the derivative noun *prakīrṇaka* refers to the hair-tufts that bob and wave as decorations on horses or that are used for fly-whisks.

Married women in India normally wore their hair braided; their hair was unbraided and unbound, *prakīrṇa*, at times when they were in a period of impurity—as these women are now, with a member of their family dead—or after childbirth, or during menstruation. The binding and loosing of women's hair is often charged with similar meanings in many different cultures. There is for example the link between the profound grief of Lady Constance and the binding and loosing of her hair in Act III, scene 4, ll. 40–105, of Shakespeare's *King John*, an instance I came upon by chance. Alf Hiltebeitel's brilliant article "Draupadī's Hair," summarizes some of the basic brahminic sanctions on this interesting subject and contains references to both South Asian and general, cross-cultural, treatments of the sociocultural valorization of hair (see especially 186–87, nn. 27–29). (For more on the issue of Draupadī's hair, see the note to *MBh* 12.16.25.) Discriminating readers will find a useful presentation of some of the significatory uses of women's hair in South Asian cultural history in Karen Lang's "Shaven Heads and Loose Hair: Buddhist Attitudes toward Hair and Sexuality," on pp. 32–53 in the uneven collection of essays edited by Wendy Doniger and Howard Eilberg-Schwartz, *Off with Her Head! The Denial of Women's Identity in Myth, Religion, and Culture.*

9.10 (2). *helplessly: anāthavat,* "uncontrollably." The semantics of English "help" are interestingly complex, and Sanskrit *nātha* parallels them to some extent. Both words seem

to have the idea "ward off trouble" (that is, any negative condition) at their base. The word *anāthavat* means "not being able to help oneself" and frequently modifies verbs expressing the emotions of grief. But the word *nātha* also means "a person who 'helps,'" "he who wards off trouble," "a patron or protector." This word comes to mean "lord," "God," and, for women, refers to their fathers and husbands and sons, the men who provide the *rakṣaṇa* ("keeping in a good condition [i.e., safe]; protection and control") required by dharma. Thus in this context *anāthavat* is also a reference to the cause of these women's grief—they are "without their husbands." See too Jan Gonda's discussion of this word in *Ancient Indian Kingship from the Religious Point of View*, 4.

9.11. *secluded mountain valleys: guhābhya iva śailānām*, "mountain fastnesses"; suggested by the image of these young women emerging into the courtyards between their tall residences.

10.7. *the sharp blades of weapons: śastra-s*. The word *śastra* is a word for "weapons" in general, though primarily it refers to weapons with sharp, cutting edges, that is, "blades." "Weapons" alone would be unnecessarily over-general, and "blades" alone would be rather arch.

10.21. *Kṛpa Śāradvata:* On the day after he finally enters Hāstinapura triumphantly, Yudhiṣṭhira, "observing the proper form of behavior toward a teacher" (*guruvṛtta*), will pay homage to Kṛpa (*MBh* 12.45.8). The text suggests that Yudhiṣṭhira was being dutiful and controlling his feelings (he is said to carry out that proper behavior *yatavrata*, "strictly"), but otherwise there is no hint of enduring bad feelings about Kṛpa's role in the slaughter of the five Draupadeya boys. Kṛpa plays a relatively prominent role among those present as Yudhiṣṭhira receives Bhīṣma's dying instruction, and later he becomes Parikṣit's teacher (17.1.13).

11.2. *who was in an agony of grief over the dead boys:* A brief reference from the Pāṇḍava point of view to the events narrated in the first portion of Book 10, *The Book of the Attack upon the Sleeping Enemy*. Between the remnant trio's splitting up just narrated at the end of Chapter 10 and Yudhiṣṭhira's going to meet Dhṛtarāṣṭra here, there intervened, in the story line, the events narrated in the second section of Book 10: the Pāṇḍavas' pursuing and confronting Aśvatthāman alone, his launching of the "*brahman*-head" weapon to eliminate the Pāṇḍavas, and so forth. See the narrative synopsis in the introduction. The fact that there is no hint here that those events have recently transpired is an interesting piece of evidence bearing upon how the archetype of this particular written Sanskrit version of the *MBh* came to be in the form it did.

11.5. *shrieking like ospreys: kurarīṇām . . . krośantīnām*, a simile that occurs many times in the Sanskrit epics. For example, at *MBh* 1.6.11 Pulomā explains to her husband Bhṛgu that she was "like a shrieking *kurarī*" when, while he had been gone, a Rākṣasa picked her up to carry her off. (The Rākṣasa's suddenly seizing her caused the child in her womb to be born on the spot, and the monster turned to ashes when he saw the sun-like child, Cyavana.) Here, Yudhiṣṭhira comes upon thousands of women grieving as a result of his actions. They are gathered along the bank of a wide river, just the sort of place where, when food is plentiful, ospreys may live in colonies of several hundred (see Frank H. Knowlton, *Birds of the World*, 233). "Shrieking like ospreys," they assail him.

The osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) is well suited to this literary niche. Knowlton reports that ospreys "are much attached to their homes and return year after year to the same nest, where if unmolested they rear an annual brood" (232). Their nests are often conspicuous atop trees along the shores of the large bodies of water from which they take the fish that is their sole food. Knowlton reports that ospreys are "brave" in defending their nests with diving counterattacks accompanied by shrill screaming (234). Salim Ali's *Handbook of the Birds of India and Pakistan* shows that ospreys observed in South Asia are considerably smaller than neighboring sea and fish eagles, some of which are notorious robbers that regularly harass the osprey into dropping its catch (see Knowlton, *Birds of the World*, 233). When the *MBh* uses the female *kurara*'s shrill screams to describe women's expressions of pain, it frequently tells us that these are the shrieks of a tormented or pained (*ārtā* or *duḥkhitā*) *kurarī*.

I argue elsewhere (see the note below to 11.16.8 and my "Some Storks and Eagles Eat Carrion") that the Sanskrit words *kurara* and *kurarī* must apply to some other aquatic eagles as well as to the osprey. In particular I argue that another widely known South Asian predatory bird, the ringtailed fishing eagle (*Haliaetus leucoryphus*), fits all the *MBh*'s explicit indications for *kuraras* even better than the osprey does, because this bird also eats carrion, which, the

MBh tells us frequently, the *kurara* does, but the osprey does not. Of course arguing that *kurara* refers to the ringtailed fishing eagle does not preclude the word from referring to ospreys as well, and it seems quite clear that the ospreys were included in the set of *kurara*. The osprey in particular seems definitely to have been the basis for this frequent simile describing women in grief or panic.

11.7. *the unprecedented cruelty: sā-ādyā nṛśaṃsatā;* literally, "this cruelty the first (of its kind)."

11.8. *even after you killed Jayadratha:* "you killed" meaning, as with Bhīṣma and Droṇa, "having caused his killing"; for these women must be imagined as knowing very well that it was Arjuna who killed Jayadratha. Jayadratha was the king of Sindhu in the Northwest and the husband of Dhṛtarāṣṭra's sole daughter Duḥśalā (not Duḥśālā; see *MBh* 1.108.18). The exact point of his being included in a trio with Droṇa and Bhīṣma here is not immediately clear. Probably the author of this passage was simply trying to represent the personal point of view of the Kaurava women, who, in mentioning Jayadratha, refer to the only warrior on the Kaurava side who had taken a wife from the Bharatas. (Of course, since there was only one girl born in the entire Bhārata generation from Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Pāṇḍu, and Vidura, only one warrior could be a son-in-law of Dhṛtarāṣṭra.) Jayadratha was thus an unusual man from their point of view and an affinal relative of the Pāṇḍavas. On the other hand, what these women say here contains no allusion to the special antagonism that Jayadratha provoked in the Pāṇḍavas. He had attempted to carry Draupadī away near the end of the Pāṇḍavas' twelve-year term in the forest (see *MBh* 3.248–56). And when Arjuna's valiant young son Abhimanyu had penetrated the Kaurava ranks on the thirteenth day of fighting, Jayadratha singlehandledly closed the way behind Abhimanyu's breakthrough by preventing four of the Pāṇḍavas from following him (see *MBh* 7.32, 41–42). (Arjuna was off fighting the warrior bands who were "sworn" [*saṃśaptaka*] to his defeat; they had taken this oath, in part, in order to separate Arjuna from the other Pāṇḍavas, Yudhiṣṭhira in particular [see *MBh* 7.16]). For the stunning tale of Arjuna's killing of Jayadratha, see *MBh* 7.121. Jayadratha was one of the *MBh*'s exaggerations of the irascibility and propensity to violence of those in society who wielded military power. His father's name was Vṛddhakṣatra, "He in whom the Power-of-Arms was fully grown, or mature." (Two other senses of *vṛddha*, "full-grown," are also possible here: "old-and-venerable," and "preeminent".)

11.19. *Pārijāta* tree: *Erythrina indica*, the "coral tree"; according to BR, "a magnificent tree that . . . covers itself with large crimson flowers." According to J. D. Hooker's *The Flora of British India*, several genera of *Erythrina* are found in South Asia and all have "large, coral-red [flowers] in dense racemes, produced usually before the development of the large . . . leaves" (2: 188 ff.). What is relevant here is the striking visual effect of the red flowers on the ends of the otherwise bare branches.

12.12. *truly courageous: satyavikramaḥ*, a quality Bhīma displays throughout the *MBh* that is obviously relevant to Bhīma's willingness to be embraced by the father of so many warriors he had killed. The term can also mean "zealous for the truth," a meaning which is (ironically) relevant to the upcoming exchange regarding whether or not Bhīma really drank Duḥśāsana's blood.

12.15. Technical Note: *Weeping, he embraced Bhīma:* A triṣṭubh with perfect upajāti scansion seemingly used as a closing tag, but it may be a fragment of another poet's rendition of the episode. See the upajāti triṣṭubh passage at 11.21.11–14.

13.6. Technical Note: *rejecting it: avākṣipya*. Three times in the two Sanskrit epics participial forms of this verb appear with the double prefix *ava-ā-*, which seems to have escaped the attention of earlier lexicographers.

14.5. *when she was in the assembly hall . . . :* The incidents mentioned here and in stanza 7 refer to the molestation of Draupadī in Book 2, *The Book of the Assembly Hall*. See "Draupadī" in the LCP.

14.10 (1). *Now that I have killed Duryodhana in battle:* Since Bhīma is the speaker here, I think it is better to understand him to be the implicit subject of the gerund *hatvā* ("have killed"), rather than construe just what is explicit, which would make Yudhiṣṭhira its subject.

14.10 (2). *Yudhiṣṭhira has passed over that hostility safely: vairasyāsya gataḥ pāram . . . yudhiṣṭhiraḥ prāptaḥ*. Literally, Yudhiṣṭhira reached "the further shore" of the hostility.

14.12. *In the battle when Vṛṣasena had killed Nakula's horse:* Gāndhārī has it wrong here, and I think the mistake is intentional on the part of the author. Vṛṣasena killed Nakula's horses shortly after Bhīmasena killed Duḥśāsana and drank his blood (the death of Duḥśāsana is told at 8.61.5–6, and it is 8.62.22 that tells us that Nakula's horses were killed in a battle between Nakula and Karṇa's son, Vṛṣasena. Bhīma assisted Nakula in that battle and eventually rescued him after his horses were killed. Gāndhārī has it wrong, and Bhīma, who knows full well that it is wrong, nonetheless, seizes upon her error to attenuate the horror of what he did when he says, just below, at 11.14.16, "Yes, I did terrify my brothers [having wetted his lips and teeth with the blood of Duḥśāsana's warm body] who were already overwrought because they had watched Vṛṣasena kill Nakula's horse in battle." A great scholar of the *MBh*, Yaroslav Vassilkov (personal communication), disagrees with my interpreting this discrepancy as intentional. He sees here a normal kind of variation in traditional epic literature. There is, of course, a profound question of hermeneutic method involved here. I do believe the *MBh*—so thoroughly a series of face-to-face verbal exchanges!—does, from time to time, exhibit a keen sense of the fact that people often utter falsehood in error and that often people lie, or speak less than the whole truth to each other. One can never take any statement in the *MBh* at simple face value without examining the full context of its utterance and its relation to all other pertinent statements and narratives. I am thus still inclined to see in this discrepancy a deliberate literary construction, but much more examination of and reflection on the *MBh* would be required to argue this point of view forcefully.

14.13. *barbarians: anāryajana.*

14.15. *His blood did not go past my lips:* At 8.61.6–7 Saṃjaya describes what happened by saying, "[H]e drank his warm blood, gulping it down with great relish. Then, looking about in a rage that knew no bounds he uttered this pronouncement: "The taste of this blood that has now been paid is far superior to mother's milk, honey, butter . . ." Bhīma, who sometimes is contemptuous of the idea that his behavior should be constrained by any rules (dharma), simply lies here, and he lies a moment later when he imputes the horror of all who saw him to their being upset at having witnessed Vṛṣasena kill Nakula's horses. He is shamelessly exploiting Gāndhārī's ignorance of the true order of events to exculpate himself at this moment. See the note to 14.12 above.

15.5. *breathing in quick pants: niḥśvāsaparamā bhṛśam.* Literally, she was "mainly [that is, "for the most part," "given over to," "doing a lot of . . ."] breathing out [exhaling], intensely [or energetically]." The compound *niḥśvāsaparama* is often associated with melancholy and then refers to frequent "sighing." Both the word *bhṛśam*, "intensely," and the context tell us that Gāndhārī's "frequent exhalation" here is a product of anger rather than melancholy (as at *MBh* 1.155.3). Gāndhārī is taking short, sharp breaths as an involuntary prelude to the remarkable aggression and extraordinary release of energy that is described next. The word is used similarly at *MBh* 5.146.26 to describe Vidura's continuing excitement immediately after his impassioned plea to Bhīṣma to prevent the annihilation of the clan that he has done so much to preserve at different times. Van Buitenen's "sighing again and again" suggests that Vidura suddenly lapsed into melancholy resignation, which I do not think is a correct interpretation even of the accompanying adjectives *dīnamānasa*, "distressed, troubled, sorrowful, depressed," and *pradhyāyamāna*, "he became abstracted in his own thoughts." The word is used in describing Arjuna's anger after he learned the details of Abhimanyu's death, just before he swore to kill Jayadratha at *MBh* 7.51.18. Gāndhārī does not assault Yudhiṣṭhira with her body, as Dhṛtarāṣṭra had just assaulted Bhīma; but her rage does operate effectively against Yudhiṣṭhira, while Dhṛtarāṣṭra's physical assault on Bhīma is embarrassed by Kṛṣṇa's intervention.

15.6 (1). *Below the edge of her blindfold:* See *MBh* 1.103.12–13 ("the beautiful woman took a kerchief, folded it many times, and vowing utter fidelity to her husband, blindfolded her eyes, . . . resolved that she would not experience more than her husband could" [van Buitenen, 1: 240]). The second śloka of the next chapter refers to her devotion as a "vow of sameness."

15.6 (2). *the great lady, who knew Law and saw Law:* These statements regarding her awareness of dharma cannot be idle (the same two expressions are said of Draupadī at 12.14.4). Are they intended to explain her not cursing Yudhiṣṭhira? Or her scorching his finger-nails for his lie to Droṇa? Or might the word *dharma* here refer directly to the person of Yudhiṣṭhira, the son of the God Dharma (which could also be the point at 12.14.4)?

15.9. *[the Pāṇḍavas] went all together to their mother Pṛthā:* It is worth observing that the Pāṇḍavas observed the correct protocols of dharma by greeting and reconciling with the king, who, as their paternal uncle, is also their "father," and his queen before joining their mother.

15.10. *after so long a time:* She has not seen her sons since they left Hāstinapura after the disastrous dicing match. On the other hand, she has lived in proximity to Karṇa the whole thirteen years.

15.11. *volley upon volley of sharp blades: śastraugha-s.*

15.13. *a poor old woman: tapasvinī.*

15.18. *[Vidura's] great speech:* Gāndhārī is referring to that juncture in Kṛṣṇa's failed embassy to the Kaurava court where she was brought into the discussion to try to dissuade Duryodhana from his resolution to fend off the Pāṇḍavas' claims with war (see *MBh* 5.127.2). Her sermon to Duryodhana is the penultimate episode of the account of Kṛṣṇa's visit to the court. It is followed by Duryodhana's vain attempt to capture Kṛṣṇa, which Kṛṣṇa answers with a miraculous vision of his divine majesty (5.128 reports Duryodhana's plotting his assault upon Kṛṣṇa and the reaction of the Kaurava elders and Kṛṣṇa himself to it, and 129.1–20 reports the assault and the theophany; for an analysis of this theophany, see Alf Hiltebeitel, *The Ritual of Battle*, 120 ff.). Two statements are attributed to Vidura in response to Duryodhana's intended assault upon Kṛṣṇa: one, made to Dhṛtarāṣṭra, lamenting Duryodhana's fatal folly (5.128.17–22), and another, to Duryodhana, listing numerous previous attempts to fetter Kṛṣṇa and predicting that Duryodhana will die if he attacks the unassailable Kṛṣṇa (5.128.41–52). The editor of *The Book of the Women*, Professor V. G. Paranjpe, has taken Gāndhārī's allusion here at 11.15.18 as a reference to Vidura's prediction (at 5.128.52) of Duryodhana's demise if he attacks Kṛṣṇa. Professor Paranjpe may be right; either or both of these speeches may be the statement of Vidura that Gāndhārī has in mind. But I think a more likely candidate is a speech of Vidura's made after Gāndhārī entered the conversation but before Duryodhana stormed out (recorded at 5.128.2). When he returned from this embassy to the Pāṇḍava base at Upaplavya, Kṛṣṇa gave the Pāṇḍavas a more detailed report of these speeches (at 5.145–48), which turned upon the theme of the clan and its continuity across the generations. Kṛṣṇa reported among these an impassioned plea by Vidura to Bhīṣma to exert himself yet again to save the Kuru clan (at *MBh* 5.146.17–26). Whereas Vidura's earlier statements addressed only Duryodhana's folly in trying to capture Kṛṣṇa, the statement attributed to him here is about the clan of the Kurus and its imminent doom. And, according to Kṛṣṇa, Gāndhārī followed up on Vidura's plea by excoriating Duryodhana, praising Vidura, and arguing that the Law of the Kuru family indicates Yudhiṣṭhira to be the rightful king.

16.2. *the words she spoke were always true:* She was "*satyavādinī*," which is not an idle epithet here. Primarily it refers to the visionary power (the "divine eye," *divya cakṣus*) she will shortly exhibit and assures us that what she says she sees is true. But it also points backward in time and assures us that her observance of her vow was undeviating. Her complete fidelity to her pledge has involved her in ascetic suffering (*tapas*); and "Merit" (dharma) and power are accumulated through *tapas* (see the description of Gāndhārī's *tapas*-power at *MBh* 9.62.10–12 and 60). These are the effective forces behind the operation of her divine eye. But, perhaps uneasy at the thought that a woman would have and use such powers, the author, Vyāsa, tells us next that Gāndhārī's mantic power came as a gift from him.

16.3. *Gāndhārī lamented many different kinds of fallen warriors: vividhaṃ paryadevayat;* most literally, "she lamented diversely." This stanza is a summary reference to Gāndhārī's synoptic vision of the battlefield and her lament for not only her own sons, but their allies and even for heroes on the other side like Abhimanyu, Dhṛṣṭaketu, and the Kekaya brothers.

16.7 (1). *jungle crows, ravens, storks, crows, eagles . . . : sṛgālabaḍakākolakaṅkakākaniṣevitam.* It is highly probable that the "*baḍa*" is Salim Ali's "Indian Jungle Crow," *Corvus macrorhynchus culminatus;* that the *kākola* is Ali's "Punjab Raven," *Corvus corax subcorax;* and that the *kāka* is Ali's "House Crow," *Corvus splendens splendens;* see Fitzgerald, "Some Storks," 260–61, which analyzes Ali's survey of the fifteen types of *Corvidae* found in southern Asia (see Ali, *Handbook*, 5: 242–66). The word *baḍa* and its allomorph *vaḍa* (both allomorphs of the previously known *bala*, "crow") were unattested before the critical edition of the *MBh* and occur in the Pune text about a dozen times each. I suspect that all these forms are shorter forms of *vaḍabhā* (and a

presumed alternative *baḍabhā*), a bird of the "pecking" (*pratuda*) class, which includes falcons, hawks, eagles, owls, crows, and others. We have three regularly occurring terms for "crow" in the *MBh* in contexts where animals feed upon the flesh of the dead (*kāka*, *vāyasa*, and *bala/ baḍa/vaḍa*), in addition to the raven. The terms *kāka* and *vāyasa* never occur together in the *MBh* and seem to be interchangeable synonyms for the "House Crow." But, as here, *kāka* or *vāyasa* can occur in a list where it is differentiated from the *bala/baḍa/vaḍa* set and from *kākola*.

16.7 (2). *storks: kaṅka.* The Sanskrit word *kaṅka* often means "heron" (and in the European lexicographical tradition, "heron" is almost the only gloss of *kaṅka*). But in most of the instances where it occurs in the *MBh* as a kind of bird with identifiable behavior, the bird cannot be a heron. (In many instances in the *MBh*, *kaṅka* merely specifies the kind of bird that provided the feathers used for fletching arrows shot in battle, while indicating nothing about the bird itself.) As in the instance here, so frequently throughout the *MBh*, the *kaṅka* is a carrion-eating bird, one which sometimes circles overhead with vultures, crows, and "buzzards" (for instances of this activity, see 5.183.23 and 6.108.8 [where I believe *balākāś ca* in pāda 8a is an incorrect reading for *baḍāś caiva*]; for "buzzard," see the note to 12.37.18) and feeds on battlefield remains with those birds and with jackals. Neither of these forms of behavior occur in herons, and it is reasonable to surmise that this *kaṅka* is a stork, most likely the gigantic, two-meter stork *Leptopilos dubius*, known in modern India as the "adjutant" or the lesser adjutant (*Leptopilos javanicus*; see Fitzgerald, "Some Storks," 258–59, for more based upon reading Ali's description of the Ciconiiform birds [*Handbook*, 1: 49–122] against the descriptive information of the *MBh*. In a wide-ranging essay etymologically probing some Indian word families, Professor Rahul Peter Das examined many old occurrences of the word *kaṅka*; see Das, "Altindoarisches *kāca*- '(Joch-) Strick; Joch' und die Sippe um tamilisches *kā* 'Stange; Joch:'" 261 ff., esp. 265–72). Working primarily with Vedic attestations and the testimony of modern dictionaries of Indo-Aryan languages, Das pointed to evidence that the word *kaṅka* referred to some kind of carrion-eating bird of prey. He went on to suggest that the word *kaṅka* might originally signify the general "poking, or sticking" action ("*Stechen*") with their beaks that is characteristic of hunting birds, carrion-feeding birds, cranes, and ground-feeding birds ("*Schreitvögel*," "striding birds," the *Gressores*, according to the *Wahrig Deutsches Wörterbuch*, by Gerhard Wahrig). The most specific indication of the *kaṅka* that Das found was in a Bengali dictionary that glossed the word with "*hāṛgilā*," also known as "Argala," which is the Marabou stork, *Leptopilus dubius*). Das also points out and reflects upon the interesting fact that this word serves as a proper name of Yama, the Lord of the Dead ("Altindoarisches *kāca*-," 269 and 271), another connection of this deity to Yudhiṣṭhira (see Fitzgerald, "Some Storks" 257–58).

16.8. *eagles: kurara.* While some *kuraras* are ospreys (see the note to 11.11.5), this *kurara* cannot be one, for osprey do not eat carrion (see Ali, *Handbook*, 1: 337). Once again, see Fitzgerald, "Some Storks," 259–60, for an argument, based upon my reading of Ali's account of the many Falconiform raptors (*Handbook*, 1: 210–369) in light of the indications of the *MBh*, that the most ospreylike carrion-eater is Ali's ringtailed fishing eagle, *Heliaetus leucoryphus*.

16.15. *These women were in shock and helpless:* for *śrāntānāṃ cāpy anāthānāṃ nāsīt kā cana cetanā*. I take the sense of shock from the combination of "exhausted" (*śrānta*) and "they had no intelligence or sense" (*nāsīt kā cana cetanā*), which I understand to mean that at that time they had no general awareness, took no cognizance of anything other than their loss and its pain.

16.19. *those bulls of the Bharatas:* Of course the majority of the fallen were not Bharatas, having come from many different lands. See the accounts of troop musters in Book 5 (e.g., *MBh* 5.19).

16.22 (1). *collar-plates: niṣkaiḥ.* According to Nīlakaṇṭha (at *MBh* 1.110.36) a *niṣka* is worn around the neck, and commentators on *Rāmāyaṇa* 2.64.18 say it is a breast ornament. I imagine some kind of flat piece of metal worn suspended around the neck, arching across the upper chest. At *MBh* 1.110.36 Pāṇḍu removes his *niṣka* along with his crest-jewel, earrings, and bracelets as he takes up an ascetic way of life in the forest.

16.22 (2). *bracelets and armlets: aṅgadair hastakeyūraiḥ.* MW explains both *aṅgada* and *keyūra* as bracelets worn on the upper arm. I use "armlet" for *aṅgada* and take *hastakeyūra* as an armlet worn at the wrist (*hasta* is "hand") and so render that with "bracelet," which, at least in current American English, generally signifies an armlet worn at the wrist, or at least on the forearm.

16.36. *necklaces of gold: haritasrajaḥ.* This compound is ambiguous; it could mean simply "golden (or yellow) garlands." I take it to mean a "wreath" or chain woven of gold because of the repeated theme of the warriors' wearing of golden armor, collar-plates, armlets, and bracelets. My interpretation of this word is influenced by my interpretation of the less ambiguous parallel expression *śātakaumbhyaḥ srajaḥ* just below in 16.39 and again at 19.21. The reference to "all the different garlands wilting in the heat of the sun" at 11.25.5 confirms what we would otherwise expect, that many soldiers wore garlands of flowers. But, given the parallel to *śātakaumbhyaḥ srajaḥ* and emphasis upon gold apparel, the evidence seems to favor "necklaces of gold" over "golden garlands."

16.39. *gold necklaces: śātakaumbhyaḥ srajaḥ.* The word *sraj* must here refer to some kind of chain worn around the neck, rather than a garland of flowers. The *śātakumbha* is said in some traditional lexica to be *Nerium odorum*, a South Asian variant of the oleander shrub, but attestations of the word meaning this rather than "gold" are rare. Hooker, says the color of the flowers of *Nerium odorum* are "rose, white, or yellow" (*Flora*, 3: 655), but other sources (Alexander Nairne, *The Flowering Plants of Western India*, 181, and Oleg Polunin and Adam Stainton, *Flowers of the Himalaya*, 260) indicate that yellow flowers are rare for this plant. So *śātakaumbhī* here must mean "golden." I take that to describe "made of gold" rather than simply "golden in color" because of the repeated emphasis in this episode upon the warriors' wearing of gold. See my comments upon the more ambiguous *haritasrajaḥ* just above at 16.36.

16.40. *strings of pearls: hāra-s.* According toMW, a *hāra* is a "garland of pearls, necklace (according to some, one of 108 or 64 strings)."

16.56. *sink into misery: duḥkhaṃ gāhanti.* The *duḥkhaṃ* could be taken adverbially ("miserably"), but I prefer to follow Vassilkov's lead and read the *gāhanti* twice.

17.4. *muscular: sugūḍhajatru;* literally, "with collar bone and ribs deeply buried."

17.9. *an expert shot: kṛtāstra.* An *astra* is a "missile," a projectile weapon "hurled" at its target. Basically *astra-s* are arrows shot by bows, and, when appropriate, I use the verb *shoot* and its cognates to refer to these "missiles" and their use. The first member of the compound, the past passive participle *kṛta*, here means "having mastered," "having become accomplished at," and derives from the more basic sense of "having done, finished, or completed." This use of the participle is found in the occasional *MBh* adjective *kṛtaprajña*, "(one who has) become very wise," and in the more frequent and sweeping descriptive term *kṛtātman*, which basically means "fully educated" or "accomplished" (one whose mind or "spirit" has been fully formed, is "completed" or "perfected").

18.14. *whooping raucously like cranes: sārasya iva vāśantyaḥ.* "Cranes have exceptionally powerful, stentorian voices made possible by the specialized structure of the trachea or windpipe—abnormally lengthened, convoluted and coiled—which functions as a highly efficient resonating organ" (Ali, *Handbook*, 2: 136).

18.16. *harem: avarodhana*, the "secluded" part of a palace where the women lived and, by association, the women of that "seclusion." I think "harem" is sufficiently Anglicized to be used here, where the social institution is generically identical, even though this Arabic word is tightly associated in English usage with West Asian and Islamic cultures.

18.28. *out for revenge: atyamarṣaṇa.* The word *amarṣa* typically means "impatient, easy to anger, choleric, enraged," but its basic sense is "not willing to tolerate, forgive, or overlook an offense." Bhīma's rage here is intent upon redressing the wrongs done by Duḥśāsana during the dicing match to which Gāndhārī has just referred.

19.1. *who was generally esteemed for being wise: prājñasaṃmata.* Vikarṇa played a somewhat special role among the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra and Gāndhārī. Of the Kauravas, he alone demurred during the dicing match, after Duḥśāsana had dragged Draupadī into the assembly and after Draupadī had challenged the validity of Yudhiṣṭhira's having staked her. Vikarṇa argued she had not been validly staked, but was ridiculed and answered vehemently by Karṇa. See *MBh* 2.61, van Buitenen, 2: 145–46.

19.6. *The Goddess of the Splendor of the Earth does not abandon: na jahāty enaṃ lakṣmīḥ.* The shafts that have pierced his body are made from two things associated with Lakṣmī, arrows made of iron (*nārāca-s*) and arrows made from lotus reeds (*nālīka-s*).

19.8. *like the moon on the seventh night:* On the seventh night of the bright fortnight, when the moon is half full. Rather unsettling praise of Durmukha's poor face!

19.18. *that good man:* I take the accusative *vasu* here in its old, general sense as a reference to Viviṃśati. The point of the word here seems to be the etymological interplay with "Vāsava."

19.20. *it looks like a mountain covered with karṇikāra trees in bloom:* The word for "tree" here (*ātmaruha*, "ascending, growing, on its own") is unusual and not completely understood, but many compounds ending in *-ruh* and *-ruha* refer to plants and trees. I base my gloss of it here mainly on the commentaries to *Rām.* at 6.55.26, where it is glossed with *vṛkṣa*, "tree," and *taruprabhṛti*, "trees and so forth." It is also the case that the *karṇikāra* is definitely a kind of erect tree, for several times in the *MBh karṇikāras* toppled by the wind are mentioned in similes.

BR identifies the *karṇikāra* first as *Pterospermum acerifolium*, which is an ornamental tree with white flowers, and Pollock (in Robert P. Goldman, ed., *The Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki*) has accepted this identification at *Rām.* 2.86.22, though I do not think that is right. BR goes on to identify *karṇikāra* also as *Cassia fistula*, which is the only identification offered by V. S. Apte's dictionary *(The Practical Sanskrit-English Dictionary)*. It would seem that the latter species is the tree involved here, because its traits, and not those of *Pterospermum acerifolium*, explain the metaphor here very well. *Cassia fistula*, the "pipe" *cassia*, or "Indian laburnum," also known as "Golden Shower," has long (up to two feet long) conspicuous racemes of bright yellow flowers that emerge when it loses its leaves in April as the weather gets hot. What is most relevant here, though, to Duḥsaha's being covered with arrows, is the trait that gives the tree its Linnaean name and the English name (pudding pipe tree) by which it is known in Northern Africa, where it also grows, namely, its seed pods, which stay on its branches after it loses its leaves "even up to the time when the flowers open" (Benthall, *The Trees of Calcutta and Its Neighbourhood*, 189). In Benthall's description "the tree is often conspicuous for its immense, blackish, slender, cylindrical pods which hang long on the bare branches" (189). These pods are generally between one and two feet in length. In our case here the long dark pods against the bright yellow flowers correspond to the many arrows seen against the background of the gold Duḥsaha is wearing. (The pulp of this tree's pods and its root-bark is an old, well-known purgative, one of the varieties of "senna," so the tree has an interesting international history. See the *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. "cassia." Besides sources already mentioned, this note relies upon general botanical information taken from Hooker, *Flora*, 2: 261; Nairne, *Flowering Plants*, 96; Bor, *Indian Forest Botany*, 72; *The New Columbia Encyclopedia*, *ss.vv.* "cassia" and "senna"; and the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, *ss.vv.* "cassia" and "senna.")

19.21. *White Mountain:* Yaroslav Vassilkov has plausibly suggested (personal communication) that there is here a reference to the connection between the White Mountain and Fire in the stories told of the origin of Skanda at *MBh* 3.214 and 218.27 (van Buitenen, 2: 649–51 and 655.

20.6. *of three folds:* His neck was *kambuvṛtta*, "ringed like a conch-shell (*kambu*)," evidently an auspicious bodily attribute.

20.32. *the Kāmboja prince Sudakṣiṇa:* Arjuna dueled and killed one Sudakṣiṇa, "the son of the Kāmboja king," at 7.67.59–71. Evidently this duel is what the author of this passage has in mind, but this Kāmboja prince was a great warrior in Duryodhana's army who led an entire division down from the Northwestern kingdom of Kāmboja and, though "the son of the Kāmboja king," he was not a young boy as represented here. See the critical notes of the editor, Professor Paranjpe, to this passage and to 11.25.1.

21.11–14. Technical Note: *Surely . . . :* Four almost perfectly regular upajāti triṣṭubh stanzas that seem definitely to record a parallel account of the grief of Karṇa's wife. Verse 11d, reading *dhanaṃjayenāhave śatrumadhye*, has an irregular second foot, heavy-light-heavy, instead of the usual heavy-light-light. Most manuscripts record forms of the word "battle" (*āhava*) that are grammatically less likely, but which conform to the upajāti standard. Paranjpe correctly preferred *āhave*. He had decent manuscript evidence ($Ś_1$, $K_{4.5}$, $B_{0.1.2}$, D_7, G_3, and M_4) for following Sukthankar's principle of preferring metrically irregular readings over regular ones.

21.11 (1). *your teacher's curse:* Rāma Jāmadagnya had cursed Karṇa because Karṇa had lied to him about his *varṇa*. See *MBh* 12.2–3 and the LCP, s.v. "Karṇa," for the entire story.

21.11 (2). *when the earth swallowed up the wheel of your chariot:* In his final duel with Arjuna Karṇa's chariot had become mired in the mud. See *MBh* 8.66.60 and the LCP, s.v. "Karṇa."

22.1. *This hero from Avanti:* Gāndhārī's review of dead warriors generally mentions only the most prominent and important of the dead, but this "Āvantya" is quite obscure. The most prominent men from Avanti were the brothers Vinda and Anuvinda, but they cannot be meant here, since both of them were killed by Arjuna, and Gāndhārī mentions them specifically at 11.25.26. An otherwise unnamed warrior from Avanti is mentioned in the *MBh* several times alongside the king of Kaliṅga and Jayadratha. But the text does not describe his death, nor does it anywhere else mention that such an "Āvantya" was killed by Bhīma.

22.7. *filled with grief at the death of his son, and was keeping a promise he had made:* When he learned that Abhimanyu had been killed on the thirteenth day of the war, when Jayadratha had cut Abhimanyu off within the Kaurava lines, Arjuna swore that he would kill Jayadratha before the setting of the sun on the fourteenth day no matter who might protect him. See *MBh* 7.51.20 ff.

22.8. *while he was conquering eleven armies: ekādaśa camūr jitvā.* The first two pādas of this stanza are awkward. The gerund phrase is particularly so as it refers to a specific deed which definitely was not completed before Arjuna killed Jayadratha. Philologists may find it worth noting that there are three other references in the *MBh* to Arjuna's having killed Jayadratha (*MBh* 1.2.163, 7.125.12, and 8.4.12) that include a gerund phrase resembling, but also interestingly different from, the one here.

22.16. *without finding her husband's head:* When Arjuna decapitated him, Jayadratha's head flew off to land in his father's lap. His father Vṛddhakṣatra was performing ascetic observances at Samantapañcaka, adjacent to the Field of Kuru. See the LCP s.v. "Jayadratha."

22.17. *desperate to help their boy:* See the second half of the note above at 11.11.8 and the entries for Abhimanyu and Jayadratha in the LCP.

23.2. *He who was constantly vying with you in everything:* Quite an interesting observation! Gāndhārī must be referring to certain parallels between Śalya and Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa was a maternal cousin of the sons of Kuntī, and he kept a general protective eye on his aunt's sons; Śalya was the maternal uncle of Nakula and Sahadeva, but does not have any real presence as a protector of his sister's (Mādrī's) sons. The *MBh* also seems to make a point of contrasting the different ways each responded to Duryodhana's overtures when he was trying to enlist allies. See Hiltebeitel, *Ritual of Battle*, 256. Śalya works for Yudhiṣṭhira in a twisted way during the war (see the LCP [*ss. vv.* "Karṇa" and "Śalya"] for an explanation), and in playing the traitor to Karṇa, his role is an inversion of the role Kṛṣṇa played as Arjuna's charioteer and encouraging "coach." Walter Ruben [*Krishna*, 221, n. 11] called attention to this inversion, and Hiltebeitel analyzed it in some detail (*Ritual of Battle*, 254 ff.)

23.10. *the majestic king Bhagadatta, who used the elephant hook:* Bhagadatta, king of Prāgjyotiṣa in Assam, fought atop a mighty elephant and wrought havoc in the Pāṇḍava army before Arjuna killed his elephant and then him (at 7.28.36–44). In his duel with Arjuna Bhagadatta charged his hook with spells, transforming it into a "Vaiṣṇaiva shot *(astra)*" which he directed at Arjuna's chest. Kṛṣṇa intercepted it, explaining his forbidden intervention in the combat as having been absolutely necessary to preserve Arjuna (see 7.28.16–35).

23.15. *as a likeness of the sun: . . . sūryavarcasam.* This sense of *varcas* (which basically means "light, brilliance, luster," but, like so many other words meaning "light" in Sanskrit, can also mean "form, the particular appearance of some visible thing") was previously recorded only in the traditional *lexica*.

The *MBh* develops an extended parallelism between Bhīṣma lying upon the hero's bed of arrows after the battle and the fading of the sun. See the introduction to *The Book of Peace* for a discussion of this parallelism.

23.18. *the blessed Skanda in the reed-thicket:* See *MBh* 3.214 for an account of Skanda's taking birth in a clump of reeds on Mount Śveta (White Mountain; see above at 11.19.21), and 1.60.22.

23.19. *that best of pillows the Gāṇḍīva bowman provided with three arrows:* Bhīṣma went down, wounded but not dead, by virtue of Arjuna's reluctant shots on the tenth day of battle. At the end of that day all the main warriors from both sides gathered round the fallen Bhīṣma, and he asked for a pillow and some water. In a narrative flourish that chillingly underscores the patricidal themes of the Pāṇḍavas' killing of Bhīṣma and three other partial fathers (Droṇa, Karṇa, and Śalya), Arjuna provided the pillow by shooting three arrows into the ground beside his "grandfather's" head. Another arrow Arjuna shot near Bhīṣma's head magically provided a spout of water for his refreshment. See *MBh* 6.115.29 ff.

23.20. *who became celibate to preserve his father's rule: pālayānaḥ pituḥ śāstram ūrdhvaretā.* Nīlakaṇṭha glosses *śāstram* in a more usual sense, "command," and Ganguli follows that, rendering, "obeying the command of his sire." But I do not find any evidence of a command given by Śaṃtanu to Bhīṣma to which he would be adhering. (His father did give him the boon to choose for himself the time of his own death, but this could hardly be called a *śāstram.*) On the other hand Bhīṣma does busy himself with protecting his father's rule by procuring Satyavatī for his father by swearing celibacy himself (twice Satyavatī's father calls Bhīṣma an "apt protector of Śaṃtanu" (*nātha paryāpta*, at *MBh* 1.94.69 and 81). After his father has died, Bhīṣma again strives to preserve that rule by procuring wives for his father's royal heir Vicitravīrya.

23.21. *he still has the breath of life as if he were immortal:* A reference to Bhīṣma's choosing his own time for death, as granted to him by his father at *MBh* 1.94.94 (*svacchandamaraṇa*), and as actually chosen (the winter solstice) at 6.114.87 ff.

23.23. *spelled out his death in the war to the Pāṇḍavas:* Before the war Bhīṣma advised Yudhiṣṭhira to come to him to learn how to overcome his, Bhīṣma's own, military superiority (see *MBh* 6.41.40–43). After nine days of battle, having failed to succeed against the force led by Bhīṣma, the Pāṇḍavas heeded that advice, and Bhīṣma explained to them the stratagem by which Arjuna could knock him out of the battle (see *MBh* 6.103).

23.28. *for whom Bībhatsu Pāṇḍava did an extremely difficult deed:* A reference to Droṇa's soliciting from the Pāṇḍavas, as their concluding present to him as their teacher, an expedition against Drupada to avenge Droṇa. This was related in *MBh* 1.122.41–44 and 1.128.

23.32. *none of the four Vedas nor any of the weapons that can be shot ever lapsed from that hero's memory:* Droṇa never forgot these important things, as did others upon occasion. Here the "weapons that can be shot" (*astra-s*, missile weapons; see the note to 11.17.9) are arrows charged with mantras to endow them with extraordinary powers. Droṇa never forgot the necessary mantras.

23.34. *Kṛpī:* The twin sister of Kṛpa Śāradvata, the weapons-teacher of the Kauravas and their cousins before Droṇa was given the position. See *MBh* 1.120–21 for the basic account of her and her connection to Droṇa.

24.1. *the son of Somadatta:* Bhūriśravas. Somadatta was a Kaurava. His exact pedigree is not spelled out in the *MBh*, but Sørensen, in *An Index to the Names in the Mahābhārata*, s.v. "Somadatta," cites the *Harivaṃśa* as saying that he was the son of Bhīṣma's paternal uncle Bāhlika. Frederick Pargiter, however, knows Somadatta only as a name of the Pāñcāla king Sudāsa, "the Vedic Sudās" (*Ancient Indian Historical Tradition*, 120). He did fight with the Kauravas, and his most notable characteristic is the enmity between himself and the Yādava Vṛṣṇi prince Śini that extended into the next generation and was resolved by his son Bhūriśravas and Śini's grandson Sātyaki Śaineya, Yuyudhāna. See *MBh* 7.119.9–19 for an account of the origin of the enmity and 7.116–118 for its resolution during the Bhārata war. Included therein is Arjuna's blind-side attack on his cousin Bhūriśravas, cutting off his right arm, as Bhūriśravas was on the point of killing Sātyaki (7.117.62).

24.13. *when that one was madly engrossed in fighting and unaware of him: pramatta,* which means "intoxicated," and so forth, or "heedless," or both. Here it signifies both ideas, so I have expanded the translation some, as if it read similarly to 18cd (*yudhyataḥ samare 'nyena pramattasya . . .*). Arjuna cut off Bhūriśravas's arm with an arrow when Bhūriśravas was poised to decapitate Sātyaki, having been totally engrossed in his duel with Sātyaki. See *MBh* 7.117 and the LCP.

24.14. *after Bhūriśravas sat down to die:* After Arjuna cut off his right arm, Bhūriśravas sat down in *prāya* (see the glossary).

24.21. *a maternal uncle by his sister's son:* This statement tells us that Gāndhārī, the wife of Sahadeva's father's brother, is enough of a "mother" to Pāṇḍu's son that her brother Śakuni could be termed his *mātula*, maternal uncle, and he Śakuni's *bhāgineya*, sororal nephew.

24.24. *That expert in scams . . . has now won rebirth: nikṛtiprajñaḥ . . . sa punar jīvitaṃ jitaḥ.* The tone of this śloka and its claim that Śakuni has won rebirth (which basically contradicts what Gāndhārī says below in 11.24.27, that he was won heavenly worlds) suggest not simply that it is an interpolation, but that it represents some other tradition concerning Śakuni.

25.10. Bṛhadbala was one of many of the warriors fighting for Duryodhana whom Abhimanyu killed after penetrating the Kaurava formation on the thirteenth day of battle. See *MBh* 7.46.22. Abhimanyu was himself killed not much later: "One by many," in 7.48.8–14.

25.13. *All five:* Gāndhārī next mentions prominent warriors who fought for the Pāṇḍavas —the five Kekaya brothers, Drupada Pāñcāla, and Dhṛṣṭaketu of Cedi. Drupada, of course, was the father-in-law of the Pāṇḍavas and their principal ally in the war. Dhṛṣṭaketu was the son of Śiśupāla (whom Kṛṣṇa killed in an ugly dispute preceding Yudhiṣṭhira's consecration as universal ruler in the *The Book of the Assembly Hall;* the episode constitutes an entire sub-*parvan* of Book 2 [see *MBh* 2.37–42, van Buitenen, 2: 96–106]) and thus a relative of Kṛṣṇa.

25.31. *when you returned to Upaplavya, not having accomplished what you wanted:* See the account of Kṛṣṇa's prewar embassy at *MBh* 5.71, 81–135 and 5.145–48.

25.39. *you who are so enigmatic: duravāpātman,* "you, whose mind is hard to apprehend"; or it could be construed also as "you who are so difficult to attain."

25.41. *having slain your own kinsmen:* Gāndhārī is referring prophetically to the drunken frenzy of internecine murder that spells the end of the Yādavas, Vṛṣṇis, Andhakas, and Bhojas. See *MBh* 16.4 (B 16.3), and see *ss.vv.* "Balarāma," "Kṛṣṇa," "Kṛtavarman," and "Sātyaki" in the LCP. Kṛṣṇa may be accused of bearing some general responsibility for the slaughter because he did not intervene with sufficient energy after Sātyaki killed Kṛtavarman. A mob killed Sātyaki and his would-be protector, Kṛṣṇa's son Pradyumna, and an enraged Kṛṣṇa began slaughtering everyone within reach. In the general riot that ensued "They were racing around drunk, attacking each other—sons killed fathers and fathers killed sons" (*MBh* 16.4.40). Kṛṣṇa paused at one point and saw his sons Sāmba and Cārudeṣṇa dead, as well as Pradyumna and that one's son Aniruddha, and his brother Gada dead too. Enraged, he finished off everyone who was left (*MBh* 16.4.42–44). So it is not clear that Kṛṣṇa directly killed anyone in particular, but in some indirect sense he is liable to the charge that he killed his own sons as well as his kinsmen and members of his household. The adjectives "having slain your own kinsmen," and so on, in this verse could be construed more simply as "your kinsmen dead, your family dead, your sons dead." But the stronger interpretation seems more plausible for Gāndhārī here.

11(82) The Funeral Observances

26.3. **Technical Note:** *harsh because of his hostility: vairaparuṣam.* This reading in pāda a occurs in only one manuscript (K_4; in Northern India the reading *vairapuruṣam* is much better attested), and, as it rests upon distinguishing a "*pa*" and a "*pu*" in handwritten script, it may be a spurious variant (due to a superficial error by a copyist or collator). Nonetheless, as Professor Paranjpe, the editor, points out, the common reading is easy, and the weakly attested reading is slightly difficult, though not difficult enough to make it really *lectio difficilior.* Perhaps the better-attested reading would have been preferable, but I have translated Professor Paranjpe's reading.

26.20 (1). *complete recollection: anusmṛti.* This special faculty does not seem to be widely known in ancient Sanskrit literature. I am interpreting it purely etymologically. The prefix *anu-* often signifies movement through a series, "one after the other," and I take it here to signify the ability to recall everything he has experienced *seriatim.*

26.20 (2). *the discipline of yoga meditation: jñānayogena.*

26.21. **Technical Note:** *those bodies may be burned: kaccit teṣāṃ śarīrāṇi dhakṣyanti.* I take the active *dhakṣyanti* as used for the passive *dhakṣyante* for the sake of the meter, though of course that is not the only way to construe it. And, as often, the future is used as a conditional.

26.24. *Sudharman:* According to Nīlakaṇṭha, Sudharman was Duryodhana's house-chaplain (*purohita*). This identification makes very good sense, so I accept it, though there is nothing I know of to corroborate or rebut it.

26.30. *without losing their composure: avyagrāḥ*, that is, they were not perturbed by the gruesome details of their task.

26.33 (1). *Sṛñjayas:* The Sṛñjayas were a branch of the Pāñcālas. This line might imply that the Somadatta named here was a Sṛñjaya, that is, a Pāñcāla (see the note to 24.1 above). Furthermore, the adjective *bṛhat* ("great") preceding Somadatta could signify the "greater" or "elder" of two or more men called Somadatta. But the *MBh* as we have it now knows only one Somadatta, the old Kaurava and father of Bhūriśravas.

26.33 (2). *King Kṣemadhanvan:* A Kaurava warrior mentioned only one other time in the entire *MBh* (according to Sørensen's *Index*), at 6.17.26, which is interesting because of his relative prominence in this list and his being called a *rājan*, "ruler, king."

26.40. *a shocked numbness: kaśmalam.*

11(83) The Offering of Water

27.4. *many fine passages giving access to its waters: sūpatīrthābhavad gaṅgā bhūyo viprasasāra ca.* The text says literally, "the Gaṅgā came to have good access-passages" (a *tīrtha* is a "way across" or a "way down"), by which I imagine the river, vaguely anthropomorphized, as retreating some from its banks to create shallows and flats to accomodate the crowd of women needing access to it. It broadened out again afterwards. Thanks to Y. Vassilkov for helpful insight here.

27.21. *quietly groaning: vinadañ śanakaiḥ*, literally, "quietly making [some] noise."

27.23. *courtly area: paricchada;* the area surrounding the king, including his attendants and retinue. I have of course sundered the *sa* from *paricchada*, a measure that does not "feel" right, but which seems preferable to any interpretation of *saparicchadam* I can think of.

Book 12 (12.1–167): The Book of Peace, Part One

12(84) The Laws for Kings

Part 1: Yudhiṣṭhira Becomes King of the Bharatas

1.1 (1). *After . . . :* The action picks up directly with the conclusion of *The Book of the Women;* the libations for the allies formed that book's last episode.

1.1 (2). *[they] stayed there outside the city for a month to become clean again: tatra te sumahātmāno nyavasan kurunandanāḥ / śaucaṃ nivartayiṣyanto māsam ekaṃ bahiḥ purāt.* For a discussion of the variety of observances connected with uncleanness (*āśauca*) after death, see *HDhŚ*, 4: 268 ff. and 277 ff.

1.1 (3). *[they] stayed there outside the city for a month to become clean again:* An indication of the complex imaginative point of view of this text. It is remarkable that a victorious king would pause at all before reentering his newly regained capital, except for reasons of political expediency. And that the authors of the *MBh* depict the period of *āśauca* as a month is also remarkable. In Kane's survey of *āśauca* upon death (see the earlier note on this śloka), the longest period of time observed on anyone's death is normally three days, ten days according to some.

1.8. *brahmins by the hundreds and thousands comforted and encouraged the king:* This scene is reminiscent of the brahmins following Yudhiṣṭhira and his brother out to the forest at the beginning of *The Book of the Forest.*

1.10. *My good Yudhiṣṭhira:* Nārada's words here are reminiscent of his address to Yudhiṣṭhira at *MBh* 2.5.7 ff.

1.12. *this Royal Splendor:* Śrī. Śrī is the brilliant prosperity that attends those who are powerful and virtuous and gives them dignity, authority, majesty, and even sovereignty. It is an accompaniment and requirement of rule, but never loses its fundamental sense of visible possessions and opulence. (For more, see the note at 11.1.31.) There is irony in all of Nārada's wishes, but none greater than in the fact that the Bhārata kingdom is not, at least at this moment, overflowing with richness and prosperity.

1.18. *who kept this secret to herself:* The secret that Karṇa was her own firstborn son. Her public disclosure of this secret occurred at the end of *The Book of the Women;* see *MBh* 11.27.6 ff.

1.24. *a pile of straw: tūlarāśi.* The word *tūla* sometimes means cotton (as at *MBh* 11.23.19, where it refers to the stuffing of a pillow), but that usage seems based on a more general use of the word to refer to various shoots and sprigs (panicles, fronds, blades) growing from plants. It is such vegetation (when dried out) that burns rapidly; cotton, on the other hand, does not burn nearly as rapidly as straw.

1.33. *if the son of Pṛthā is killed:* There is bitter irony in Karṇa's words here. He pointedly names Arjuna as Pārtha, "son of Pṛthā," though he, Karṇa, is Pṛthā's son as well. And he stiffly says, "(You will have five sons) 'with Karṇa,'" instead of referring to himself more immediately and personally in the first person, as he does next when he says, "if I am killed." The *MBh* describes this moving exchange between Kuntī and Karṇa in chapters 5.143–44.

1.34. *Pleading desperately for her sons:* The pathos of this scene moves the poet to another ironic touch here as Yudhiṣṭhira describes his mother. She was "eager," or "desperate for her sons" (*putragṛddhinī*), meaning the Pāṇḍavas, as she addressed the son she abandoned as an infant, her son before she had a husband, the son for whom she never had any "greedy desire," *gṛdhyā.*

1.40 ff. *But my anger vanished when I noticed his feet:* This striking observation does not occur in the account of the dicing match in Book 2, except for a brief mention in the Southern recension of that book (*The Book of the Assembly Hall, MBh* 2, App. 1, no. 38, ll. 141–44 [to 2.63.21]). I owe that reference to Wendy Doniger (personal communication), who also pointed out that it is mentioned again at the end of the *MBh;* see 18.2.7.

2.4. *Born of friction and for friction: saṃgharṣajanana.* Karṇa is "friction-born," an apt description both of how and why he came to be. The "friction" involved in his conception is part sex, part anger, and part fear. See *MBh* 1.104 and the much more detailed 3.287–93 for the story of Sūrya's forcing himself on the girl Kuntī and restoring her virginity afterward. Once born, Karṇa was set afloat by his mother and found and raised by the *sūta* Adhiratha. Always resentful, he was always supportive of his patron Duryodhana's hostility toward the Pāṇḍavas, and was one of the main fomentors of war between the two Bharata phratries.

2.10. The "*brahman*-shot" is one of the most potent "celestial weapons" (*divyāstra*) known in the *MBh.* Different arrows charged with mantras were frequently employed by warriors in the *MBh* for effects far more telling than those of missiles not so enhanced.

2.14. Rāma, that is, the Bhārgava brahmin Rāma Jāmadagnya, who resides on the Mahendra mountain (which, according to Edward W. Hopkins [*Epic Mythology*, 8], is the Orissa chain of mountains on the eastern side of the Indian subcontinent; see *A Historical Atlas of South Asia*, 15–16, plates IIIB1 and IIIB2). This Rāma has no direct connection to Rāma, the son of Daśaratha, the subject of the *Rāmāyaṇa.*

2.21–22. *Relying on the idea that he had done it without knowing what he was doing. . . . over and over:* This element of the story bears upon Karṇa's not being a real kṣatriya. In numerous such stories in the *MBh*, the kṣatriya tries to possess the brahmin's cow (does not kill it), and makes no apologies for his action.

2.25. *[your enemy] will . . . lop off your stupid head while you are distracted: mūrdhānaṃ te vicetasaḥ / pātayiṣyati.* I use two different expressions in the translation to capture both the aspects of *vicetas* that are salient here, stupidity and unawareness. (A literal spelling out of the line reads: ". . . [your enemy] will make the head drop off of you who are stupid [*vicetas*] [and, or] when you are un-mindful [*vicetas*].") The account of Arjuna's opportunistic killing of his rival Karṇa in fulfillment of this curse occurs at *MBh* 8.67.

3.8. *even as it bit him hard and repeatedly: saṃdaśyamāno 'pi*, changing the passive into the active.

3.15. *A motley Rākṣasa . . . upon a cloud:* At *MBh* 8.29.4, as Karṇa mentions this incident to his chariot-driver, Śalya, he identifies the insect as Indra.

3.28. *So I said I was a Bhārgava:* Rāma is descended from the great Vedic seer Bhṛgu, and Karṇa has rather boldly claimed the same.

4.7. A "kingdom of women" is mentioned also in a list of kings in the third book of the *Mahābhārata;* see *MBh* 3.48.22.

4.8. *barbarian "preceptor-kings": mlecchācāryāś ca rājānaḥ.* S. K. Belvalkar, the editor of *The Book of Peace* for the Pune edition, basing his work upon the scholarship of V. Raghavan (*Indian Culture,* 443–44 and *Journal of the Banaras Hindu University,* vol. 2, pt. 1: 46) interprets these to be western, non-Aryan (*mleccha*) kings who were their own priestly advisors (*ācārya, purohita*). The Southern manuscripts read simply *mlecchāś cāryāś ca,* "barbarians and Aryans," as does the *Rāmāyaṇa* at 2.3.9 in a similar listing of assembled kings. But interestingly, the curious compound that occurs here is also read by two *Rāmāyaṇa* commentators, though it is not attested in the critical apparatus; see Pollock's note to *Rām.* 2.3.9, in Goldman, ed., *The Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki,* 2: 333.

4.10. *accompanied by eunuchs: varṣadharānvitā,* the eunuchs who were the attendants in the women's quarters.

4.17. **Technical Note:** *hand guards:* I take *āvāpa* here as an abbreviated form of *hastāvāpa,* a hand and finger guard similar to those mentioned of Karṇa in the fourteenth śloka above.

5.14. Karṇa has the epithet Vaikartana because of his cutting off, *vikartana,* of his innate armor and earrings. Vaikartana is also an epithet for Karṇa's father, the sun, in classical poetry.

6.9. *because of his devotion to Law: dharmātman,* "devoted to Law," "virtuous," "righteous," is not a negligible epithet here. The text is attributing Yudhiṣṭhira's curse to his concern that such silence as Kuntī's never again cause such a grievous violation of the norms within a family.

6.12. *the wise king . . . despaired: nirvedam akarot.* In addition to designating despair and extreme disaffection, the word *nirveda* is often used in the *MBh* to refer to the state of mind in which a person takes the resolve to live the life of *nivṛtti,* "withdrawal," from the life of *pravṛtti,* "active engagement," (that is, renouncing life in the settled, socially constituted world of purposeful action). As we shall see, the word points in that direction here. For an interesting discussion of the ideas of *pravṛtti* and *nivṛtti,* see Greg Bailey's *Materials for the Study of Ancient Indian Ideologies: pravṛtti* and *nivṛtti.* A more comprehensive and wide-ranging treatment of the entire history of asceticism and its understanding in India is contained in Patrick Olivelle's masterly *The Āśrama System: The History and Hermeneutics of a Religious Institution.*

7.5. *Damn the kṣatra way! Damn the power of the mighty chest:* It is almost as if the first speech of this family debate might have been Kuntī's words goading Yudhiṣṭhira (transmitted with Kṛṣṇa as messenger), back at *MBh* 5.130.5 ff. There she said to Yudhiṣṭhira, among other things, "The kṣatriya was produced from the chest [of the Self-Existent One] to do cruel deeds all the time for the protection of creatures. He lives by the manly might of his two arms." (5.130.7) Yudhiṣṭhira seems here to be answering her words there. At 10.1 below, Bhīma's scathing criticism of Yudhiṣṭhira's intellect directly quotes the preceding lines of Kuntī's message (i.e, 5.130.6).

7.8. *all the three worlds: trailokya.* The old Brahminic cosmography handed down from Vedic times saw the cosmos as a stack of three distinct realms: the earth, the moisture-filled atmosphere, and the shining, high sky.

7.9. *To get a piece of the earth we totally abandoned men who were equal to the earth: . . . pṛthivīhetoḥ . . . pṛthivīsamān.* It is worth bearing in mind that a generic word for the kings and princes of ancient India was *pārthiva,* "man of the earth" (*pṛthivī,* the "wide, broad, extensive, expansive" one [*pṛthu*]).

7.19b. **Text Amendment:** *full of desire, passion, anger, and exhilaration:* I amend Belvalkar's text here, because the reading *-samanvitāḥ,* "full of," is better-warranted than is Belvalkar's reading *-(a)samañjasāḥ,* "(anger and exhilaration) did not befit (them)," and the difference in reading makes a significant difference in the meaning of the text.

7.26. *Because of his desperate love for his son:* The stanza (śloka) number indicated in the margin is 26 because I have modified the order of verses here, inserting śloka 25 just ahead of the second verse of 23. There are times, especially in connected groups of ślokas forming a single sentence like this (what come to be called *kulaka-s* in later rhetorical analysis), when such syntactic shifting is called for to make the translation clear or smooth.

7.30. *through our own fault: ātmano . . . doṣāt,* that is, of Duryodhana, as a member of the same family.

7.34. *Holy Learning says: iti śrutiḥ.* The term *śruti* (literally, "what is heard or learned") does not necessarily refer to the text of the Vedas in the *MBh,* though in later Brahminic scholarly literature the word is often limited to the sense of "the text that has been learned *verbatim*" (i.e., the recited text of the Veda as opposed to brahminic teachings that are taught more loosely, from immemorial tradition that does not have specific Vedic textual basis, i.e. *smṛti*). But it can refer to the Veda, and it is used to refer to teachings which are tantamount to the Veda. I reject the term "Revelation" (which, in terms of substance, is not an entirely unsuitable term) because that word is much too heavily laden with different Christian and Islamic overtones and might set up misleading echoes in the text. Since the quotations Yudhiṣṭhira offers here are not, as far as I know, direct quotations from any Vedic texts, it would also be misleading to translate *śruti* with "The Vedas say." In light of these difficulties, I have chosen the somewhat cumbersome, but I think, accurate, "Holy Learning" to render *śruti.*

7.35. *[he] attains to perfection as brahman: brahma sampadyate tadā,* an expression used several times in the *MBh,* especially in the *Mokṣadharmaparvan.* At their simplest the words mean "he reached *brahman,*" or "he entered, or joined with *brahman.*" But this verb also carries the sense of "becoming full, complete, or perfect," and the way it is used in the *MBh* typically implies that extra charge of meaning. Typically, as here, the phrase concludes some description of an ideal state of mind or spirit (such as "being resolute on the path" [*prāptavartmā kṛtamatir*] here), or follows some other characterization of beatitude (such as the "not suffering birth and death" of this stanza). Thus I work in this notion of completion, perfection, or final beatitude, with "attains to perfection as" when I translate the expression. Perfection seems a more neutral phrase than either "completion" or "beatitude." I say "as *brahman*" because I think the basic idea is very close to another not infrequent expression of the *MBh,* "having become *brahman*" (which occurs for the first time shortly below, at 12.24; see the note there).

7.36. *he no longer lives between the pairs of opposites: nirdvaṃdva.* The *dvaṃdva-s* are the pairs of opposites which define the continua in terms of which ordinary life is perceived—good-bad, hot-cold, like-dislike, praise-blame, friend-enemy, gold-clay, pleasure-pain, and so forth. The term, which is not known in the classical Upaniṣads, becomes in the *MBh* a quick way to indicate an aspirant's radical transcendence of the structuring of his or her perception and apperception by his or her desiring ego.

8.1 ff. *Now Arjuna:* Arjuna leads the charge against Yudhiṣṭhira in this debate. Readers may find it interesting to compare their conflict here with the serious fight between them (Arjuna intended to decapitate his elder brother) recorded at *MBh* 8.48–50 (B. 8.68–71; an inflated rendition, by the standard of the Pune edition), where Arjuna let drop the accusation that Yudhiṣṭhira was "a coward because of Law" *(dharmabhīruka).* This charge is quite relevant to this context.

8.2. Aindri, "son of Indra," is quite an unusual, though very apt, name for Arjuna in the *MBh.* It is no doubt used here to heighten the image of Arjuna's ferocity, as was the epithet *arisūdana,* "destroyer of enemies," a few lines above in the preceding chapter.

8.3. *What heights of sissy feebleness!: aho vaiklavyam uttamam.* Sanskrit *vaiklavya* is only "weakness, or feebleness" by itself. I have injected the sexual innuendo because Arjuna immediately follows up these exclamations with explicit accusations that Yudhiṣṭhira is unmanly (so too Bhīma and Draupadī shortly; at 12.10.15 and 12.12.13–14 respectively). Of all the possible objections he might make to his eldest brother's plan to withdraw to the forest, Arjuna points to Yudhiṣṭhira's wish first as a renunciation of Śrī, the lovely Goddess "Royal Splendor," a beautiful and lavishly adorned woman who represents the marvelous bounty, success, and fecund potency of the king (see the notes above to 11.1.31 and 12.1.12). Arjuna makes the sexual implications insultingly explicit by effectively summarizing what he has just said with the term *klība,* "eunuch," shortly below in 8.5.

8.4. *unless you are daft: buddhilāghavāt,* "(except) from lightness of mind."

8.6. *not someone who has sons and cattle:* It is true that Yudhiṣṭhira is a victorious king, not a man "whose fortune is gone, someone who has nothing at all." But Yudhiṣṭhira *is* without sons (both his sons [Prativindhya, whose mother was Draupadī, and Yaudheya, whose mother was Devikā Śaibyā; see Chart 3 in Appendix 3] were killed in the war). In fact, at this point in time, all the Pāṇḍavas are without descendants. Only when Kṛṣṇa revives the dead Abhimanyu's dead baby Parikṣit does any Pāṇḍava have an heir (see *MBh* 14.65.8–9 [B. 14.66] and the following three chapters for Parikṣit's stillbirth and the laments of his mother, Uttarā, and grandmother, Kuntī; and see 14.68.23–24 and 14.69 [B. 14.69–70] for the account of his revival).

8.7. *the way of the skull: kāpālīm . . . vṛttim.* A reference to the fact that some kinds of renouncers used a skull as their bowl for begging alms.

8.11 (1). *Having nothing whatsoever: ākiṃcanya,* a term closely related to the word translated above as "having nothing at all." This idea is the theme of "The Song of the Brahmin Śamyāka" in the *Mokṣadharmaparvan, MBh* 12.170 (B. 12.176).

8.11 (2). *for cruel things must be done in poverty: kṛtyā nṛśaṃsā hy adhane.*

8.12. *the "nothing for tomorrow" ideal: aśvastanam.* An outlook that forms part of the approved and esteemed religious repertoire of renouncers seeking *mokṣa.*

8.13. *he shrinks that one's Lawful Deeds and Merit:* One might shrink another person's dharma in two senses of the word *dharma:* (1) The good works a person might do with his wealth, such as perform sacrifices to the Gods, maintain his family, give gifts to brahmins or mendicant holy men (beggars, *bhikṣu-s*), and so forth; and (2) the good karma that results from those good works, which attaches to one's inner self and gives one a good existence after death.

8.14. *as if he were a criminal: abhiśastavat,* "as if he had been accused (of a crime)."

8.29ab. *They recite the Vedas . . . :* A description of the particular dharma of brahmins.

8.29cd. *all that is better when they take it from someone else: kṛtsnaṃ tad eva ca śreyo yad apy ādadate 'nyataḥ.* These swashbuckling words are consistent with the rest of Arjuna's fierce assertion of self-interest. It is worth noting, however, that there is a somewhat milder way to construe 29cd. I think the way I have translated 29cd, particularly 29c, is the most natural and immediate way of construing the verse in this context; but it would not be stretching anything at all to read it as follows: ". . . that is splendid even if [or even when] they take it from another [or others]."

8.33 (1). *Māndhātar:* I follow van Buitenen's precedent in giving this name as Māndhātar rather than as Māndhātṛ.

8.33 (2). *Dilīpa:* For mention of the legendary generosity of Dilīpa, see 12.29.64 ff.; for Nṛga, see 3.86.5–6; for Ambarīṣa, see 3.129.1–2 and 12.29.98 ff.; for Māndhātar, see 12.29.74 ff. Nahuṣa was a very successful king, but he is most famous not for his sacrifices or generosity, but rather for taking Indra's place upon the throne of heaven for a while, and then subjugating and insulting brahmins; see 1.70.25–27, and the extended account at 5.11–17. As an important and often mentioned ancestor of the Bharatas, Nahuṣa is described in the LCP.

8.34 (1). *one made up of material substance:* As opposed to one done mentally; see *MBh* 6.26.33 (B. 6.28), which is *BhG* 4.33.

8.34 (2). *that gives the entire world to the priests as their fee: yajñaḥ . . . sarvadakṣiṇaḥ.* The present to be given to the Brahmin priests for their expertise is supposed to be the earth. *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* 8.21 mentions this as the *dakṣiṇā* for the Horse Sacrifice, the Aśvamedha. It is also the *dakṣiṇā* for the Sacrifice of All Things, the Sarvamedha rite mentioned in śloka 36, in connection with which the *dakṣiṇā* of earth is said to be inappropriate (see the first note to 12.8.36 below). For a discussion of some of the symbolic significance of this idea, see Madeleine Biardeau's 1970 article "The Story of Arjuna Kārtavīrya without Reconstruction," 293 f.

8.36 (1). *The Great God, Viśvarūpa:* I believe these words are names of Śiva here, though neither of them refers exclusively to Śiva in the *MBh,* and both in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* and at *MBh* 3.114.17 the God who originally performs the Sarvamedha rite is some form

of Svayaṃbhu, that is, basically Prajāpati or Brahmā. Nonetheless, both of these words are associated with Śiva in the *MBh,* and their occurrence together points strongly to him. And when Devasthāna (in the parallel mention of the Sarvamedha at 12.20.12) refers to the God who performed the Sarvamedha, he uses an epithet—Kṛttivāsas, "Clad in Skins"—that is used exclusively for Rudra-Śiva in early Sanskrit. That fact suggests that both verses must refer to Śiva. It creates the impression that in the memory of some of the authors of the *MBh,* Śiva has taken over the Sarvamedha from Prajāpati, just as earlier, on the bank of the Vaitaraṇī in Kaliṅga, he forced his way into the circle of Gods who receive a share of the sacrifices offered by seers and men.

Viśvarūpa in this verse is either an established epithet of Śiva, or is on its way to becoming one. The word *viśvarūpa* is a compound which in Vedic Sanskrit (1) is an adjective that means "having variegated form, with appearance or body made up of diverse elements, dappled, motley"; and (2) is a descriptive epithet of uncertain meaning (said by Apte, *Sanskrit-English Dictionary,* to mean "omnipresent"; it is frequently glossed as "omniform" [A. A. Macdonell, *Vedic Mythology,* 116; Kramrisch, *The Presence of Śiva,* 485], *"der alle Formen besizt"* [Geldner, *RV* 1.13.10, *Der Rig-Veda,* 1: 14], *"qui a [qui revêt, qui contient] toutes les formes"* [Scheuer, *Śiva dans le Mahābhārata,* 354], but this gloss cannot say much by itself). In Vedic literature Viśvarūpa was an epithet especially of the artisan of the Gods, Tvaṣṭṛ (who fashioned many wooden vessels for the sacrificial rites and who is sometimes said to perform cosmogonic functions too), and from that it becomes the proper name of Tvaṣṭṛ's son, who is three-headed (*RV* 10.8.8). One thread of meaning in the word seems to be a pronounced tension between unity and variety or plurality; conceivably the name of Tvaṣṭṛ's son, "Viśvarūpa," derives from the son's combining an unusual plurality of heads in a single body. Macdonell summarizes Tvaṣṭṛ's cosmogonic functions: "As fashioner of living forms, he is frequently described as presiding over generation and bestowing offspring (*RV* 3.4.9, etc.). Thus he is said to have fashioned husband and wife for each other from the womb (*RV* 10.10.5; *AV* 6.78.3). He has produced and nourishes a great variety of creatures (*RV* 3.55.19). Beasts belong to Tvaṣṭṛ (*ŚB* 3.7.3.11, 3.8.3.11). He is indeed a universal father, for he produced the whole world (*VS* 29.9). He is also the ancestor of the human race" (Macdonell, *Vedic Mythology,* 116). Some of Śiva's later traits are prefigured here in Tvaṣṭṛ, and Śiva eventually acquired the epithet Viśvarūpa too. (It seems a similar story could be told for the epithet Viśvakarman as well in connection with Śiva.) In the *MBh* the word *viśvarūpa* retains the first sense mentioned above ("motley"; e.g., above at 12.3.15), and the more complex senses represented by the epithet also occur. In the epic too it is the name of Tvaṣṭṛ's son (e.g., *MBh* 5.9), and in the *MBh viśvarūpa* begins to occur as an epithet for Śiva (see *MBh* 7.172.62, 7.173.88, 10.7.3, 14.8.29), as I take it to be here at 12.8.36. At 12.64.16 it is applied to Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa, though I take it there as an attributive adjective rather than a name.

Most names and epithets are obscure and are best left untranslated to avoid imposing upon them an inappropriate, overly narrow, and misleading concreteness. So I merely transcribe this presumed epithet, as I do other proper names and epithets. The name could refer to Śiva's infamously eclectic appearance or it could be a deliberate hearkening back to the Vedic Tvaṣṭṛ in an effort to attribute to Śiva some of the same creative powers. Or it could have some other meaning. For instance, it is conceivable that the word here may mean "he who is the embodiment of everything" (so Scheuer, *Śiva dans le Mahābhārata,* 354: "qui a pour form l'univers, qui contient l'univers"). The latter interpretation, which takes *rūpa* as the equivalent of *ātman* at the end of a *karmadhāraya* compound and expresses the fundamental identity of the God and created beings, fits very well in the context of Arjuna's description of this rite, in which the God offers "all beings 'and likewise himself' (or, 'and thus himself')" at a Sacrifice of All Things. It is conceivable, and it fits well here, but was it actually used that way? It would take a great deal more careful study, charting patterns of usage across a wide range of literature, to determine with any confidence which of these meanings were actually alive in the tradition and which not.

8.36 (2). *The Great God . . . a Sacrifice of All Things: viśvarūpo mahādevaḥ sarvamedhe mahāmakhe / juhāva sarvabhūtāni tathaivātmānam ātmanā //.* This stanza refers to the Sarvamedha rite described in the *ŚB* following a description of the Horse Sacrifice and The Sacrifice of a Man. It is a Soma sacrifice of ten days duration by which a sacrificer gains "supremacy, sovereignty, and lordship over all beings" (*sárveṣāṃ bhūtā́nāṃ śráiṣṭhyaṃ svā́rājyam ā́dhipatyam, ŚB* 13.7.1.1).

In so doing the sacrificer is following the example of the God Bráhma Svayaṃbhú (*sic*, neuter) who, having performed asceticism, concluded, "There is no being unlimited ["perpetuity," so Eggeling] in asceticism" (*na vái tápasy ánantyam asti*, *ŚB* 13.7.1.1.), and so he undertook to "pour [himself] as an offering into all beings and all beings as an offering into [himself]." He did so and gained the results mentioned above. The final two paragraphs of the *ŚB's* description of the Sarvamedha relate that king "Viśvakarman Bhauvana" performed this rite and by it "overpassed all beings and became everything here." And so, "verily he who, knowing this, performs the Sarvamedha, or who even knows this, overpasses all beings, and becomes everything here" (*ŚB* 13.7.1.14, trans. Eggeling). That God then gave Earth to Kaśyapa as the present for the brahmin's having served as the priest who conducted the rite. The Earth then reproached him for that: "'No mortal must give me away; thou wast foolish, Viśvakarman Bhauvana: she (Earth) will sink into the midst of the water; vain is this thy promise unto Kaśyapa.'" (*ŚB* 13.7.1.15, trans. Eggeling; see too *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa*, 8.21.)

The full and exact significance of the Sarvamedha rite is not clear, but the rite seems to encourage the king's emulating both God's identification with his creatures and his transcendence of them. And when this relationship is forged or restated as a part of sacrifice, the sacrificer gains goods reaching beyond the limits of normal earthly life. Arjuna mentions the Sarvamedha in connection with his general arguments here in chapter 12.8 about the fundamental necessity of riches for doing dharma and gaining its benefit, and Devasthāna's overall purport at 12.20.12 seems essentially the same as Arjuna's: Yudhiṣṭhira should emulate ancient kings and even Gods who offered sacrifices and did great good for themselves and others. "This (performing the Aśvamedha and the Sarvamedha) is the everlasting path of prosperity," Arjuna continues in the next śloka, 12.8.37, "[W]e have never heard that there was an end of it. This is a great, ten-chariot road, king." For Arjuna, as for Devasthāna, the point of mentioning the Sarvamedha seems to be entirely positive. Neither mentions the giving away of Earth to the priests and Earth's unhappiness at that. (But, as Biardeau [see the note to 12.8.34 above] and Jacques Scheuer [*Śiva dans le Mahābhārata*, 352] have reminded us, turning everything over to the brahmin priests invites chaos, which harms the earth. [See *ŚB* 13.7.1.14–15 and two apparent references to this passage in the *MBh*, an expanded recapitulation of it at *MBh* 3.114.17–22 and a later, analogous repetition of its basic theme at 12.49.56 ff.])

Yudhiṣṭhira learned the story of the Sarvamedha years before and had an experience similar to what that rite is said to produce. In the course of the Pāṇḍavas' tour of holy bathing shrines (*tīrthas*) during their twelve-year residence in the forest (during a time when Arjuna was not with them), the Pāṇḍavas visited the delta of the Gaṅgā and then traveled down the eastern shore of the ocean to Kaliṅga. As they had at so many other *tīrthas*, the Pāṇḍavas bathed there, in the Vaitaraṇī River (which is the name of the river in the realm of the dead), where Dharma had once sought the protection of the Gods and sacrificed, where seers frequently went to heaven with sacrifices, and where Rudra had angrily seized the sacrificial animal from a sacrifice and then returned it when the Gods agreed he should receive a share of future sacrifices (3.114.5–13). Upon entering the water Yudhiṣṭhira experienced a vision that resembles the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa's* description of Viśvakarman Bhauvana's "overpassing all beings." Yudhiṣṭhira tells Lomaśa, his guide, "As soon as I touched the water of this river I left the human realm. Look, Lomaśa! By your favor I look out upon all the worlds. And there is the sound of exalted Vaikhānasas reciting prayers!" (*MBh* 3.114.14–15). Lomaśa informs him that the Vaikhānasas he hears are three hundred thousand *yojanas* away, and then he tells Yudhiṣṭhira of "Viśvakarman Svayaṃbhu's" Sarvamedha here, his giving Earth away to Kaśyapa, Earth's angry reproach (the first two pādas of the anuṣṭubh śloka of her reproach [3.114.20ab] definitely echo the first pāda of her triṣṭubh reproach at *ŚB* 7.3.1.14), Kaśyapa's appeasement of her with asceticism, and her subsequent emergence from the water in the form of an altar (*vedīrūpā*). Lomaśa told Yudhiṣṭhira to ascend that altar now while saying, "You are Agni, Mitra, Womb, Water Divine, Seed of Viṣṇu, and navel of immortality (*amṛtasya nābhiḥ*)" (*MBh* 3.114.25).

How all of these themes and motives might be sorted out and interpreted is too much to address here. I can only second the basic thrust of Scheuer's observation about the śloka pair 12.8.36 and 12.20.12 at the end of his interesting and provocative book: "Here we venture into territory that is still unexplored. These two little verses initiate a program of research instead of bringing one to conclusion. Their exegesis would require studying the whole of the epic-purāṇic world: The ideology of sacrifice, the cycle of cosmogony and destruction of the world, the role of the *avatāra*, the function of the king as the pivot of dharma, and renunciation" (Scheuer, *Śiva dans le Mahābhārata*, 354). I would amend what Scheuer has written here only by preceding "epic-purāṇic" with "vedic-epic," a point the importance of which I hope my previous note on this stanza also demonstrates.

8.37. *a great, ten-chariot road: dāśaratha*, a description which, though it fits in plausibly enough here, must be an echo of the word *daśarātrá*, "of ten nights (duration)" [describing the Sarvamedha rite], in *ŚB* 13.7.2, the passage mentioned just above.

9.1. *Hold your thoughts and your ears firmly in your mind and listen: manaḥśrotre 'ntarātmani / dhārayitvāpi te śrutvā.* A theme taken from yogic schools of thought (based on Sāṃkhya theorizing) that envisions sensory-faculties conveying the impressions of sensory objects to the "intellect" (manas, or "Lower Mind"), which in turn relays its cognitions into the "Mind" (or "Higher Mind," typically buddhi, here *antarātman*, "inner self"). This "(Higher) Mind" is a complex repository and locus of different types of inner experience—memories, feelings, dispositions, and impulses. There are some descriptions of it and its functioning in the *Mokṣadharmaparvan*, which will form vol. 8 of this translation.

9.3. *listen to me anyway:* Yudhiṣṭhira's speech in this chapter has many verses in common (with variations, of course) with *MBh* 1.110, where his father Pāṇḍu pledges to take up the life of a forest ascetic; see *MBh* 1.110.7 ff., van Buitenen, 1: 248–49.

9.4. *I shall live in the forest: araṇye . . . cariṣyāmi.* From here through the eleventh śloka Yudhiṣṭhira describes the life of the *vānaprastha*, the forest hermit, though the term Yudhiṣṭhira uses to locate this idyllic existence is *araṇya*, a word which Joachim Sprockhoff has shown means "wilderness" in earlier brahminic literature (see "Āraṇyaka und Vānaprastha in der Vedischen Literatur"). The friendly setting Yudhiṣṭhira describes here and labels *araṇya* corresponds to the earlier sense of *vana*. In general the *MBh* does not preserve, or never knew, the sharp distinction between these terms that is found in the older literature, a situation anticipated by Sprockhoff when he wrote, "(10) What might have appeared as impenetrable wilderness or deserted wastelands and open spaces in the days of the fore-fathers, that is *araṇya*, could already serve the next generation as a variously useful forest, that is *vana*, and their grandchildren as even a comfortably familiar grove; what is far away is still foreign, only at a greater distance. We can take it for granted that the concept and scope of *araṇya* and *vana* change. For every acquisition of land, whether through migrations or wars, had to transform the uncultivated into the cultivated, foreign land into one's own. . . . It never happens that [*araṇya* that has been won by conquest] permanently remains *araṇya* in the sense in which the Saṃhitās and the Brāhmaṇas understand it. So it should not be surprising when the distinctions between *araṇya* and *vana* blurr and the two of them even become interchangeable terms" ("Āraṇyaka und Vānaprastha in der Vedischen Literatur," 42–43). For an instance of just the opposite case, a text in which the term *vana* is consistently used in the Vedic sense of *araṇya*, that is as a frightening landscape that is dangerous, indeed fundamentally inimical to human interests, see Vidura's parable of the man in the well back at *MBh* 11.5–7.

9.6. *I shall dry my body up with the heat of the ascetic practices that are prescribed: tapasā vidhidṛṣṭena.* Asceticism is typically conceived of in India as a transformative process in which a person is heated up, *tapas*, through the pain of suffering (also *tapas*) voluntarily embraced. After much experimentation I have elected not to try, generally, to import that conceptuality into the English (with such phraseology as "ascetic heating" for *tapas*), and I usually render the word with the standard English glosses of "asceticism" and "austerities."

9.12. *Or perhaps I will bring about the destruction of my body while living all by myself. . . a sage with shaven head:* Yudhiṣṭhira now switches to a description of himself as a renouncer, wandering among settlements as a beggar, a *saṃnyāsin*.

9.16. *the four orders of animate or inanimate beings:* The four orders probably applies only to the animate beings. The commentator Nīlakaṇṭha gives a standard fourfold segmentation of living beings: Embryo-born, egg-born, sweat-born, sprout-born.

9.20. Technical Note: *I will wander over this earth . . . :* Another cluster of ślokas requiring syntactic rearrangement. This summarizing statement actually occurs later in the text, at

23d. I have made it precede what it summarizes for the sake of greater clarity. But more than usual juggling was necessary here, from 20 through 23. Chiefly, a phrase from 23b must be construed with 21b–d. Actually, it appears on the face of the text that 22a–d (a stanza with echoes at several places in the *MBh* [12.234.8, 269.9, 13.129.53, and 14.46.26–27] and in the dharma literature in the Vāsiṣṭha at 10.8 and in Manu at 6.56) was inserted between 21 and 23 at some point in the text's history. It may have been intended as a parenthesis or an aside; perhaps it found its way into the text as a marginal note on a written page.

9.26. *I shall be restricted:* This stanza is ambiguous, and Nīlakaṇṭha explains it in a different way at each of its two occurrences (here and at 1.110.16), though the context is essentially the same in both instances. When Pāṇḍu envisions the ascetic life in the forest, Nīlakaṇṭha, followed by van Buitenen, understands the "actions" the stanza refers to as rites, and he construes *nimeṣādivyavasthitaḥ* to refer to the specific points in time when particular rites would be done. In the instance here, with Yudhiṣṭhira speaking, Nīlakaṇṭha, followed by Ganguli, construes "actions" in a general sense and understands *nimeṣādivyavasthitaḥ* to mean "restricted to (the basic bodily functions,) blinking my eyes, (eating, drinking,) and so on." Both interpretations are generally plausible, but ultimately I find the second interpretation more persuasive. (In fairness to Nīlakaṇṭha, there is a small difference in the wording of the two instances that makes his differential interpretations understandable as not simply a lapse.) In contexts such as this a specification such as "one who is alive" (*jīvat*) typically has the universalistic connotations of "(any) living being" (which carries the implication of wanting to stay alive). That universal tone (which of course is neither the only way to take *jīvat*, nor a necessary way to take it here) works against the idea that "actions" here is limited to ritual actions. Reinforcing the more universalistic interpretation is the fact that the word *nimeṣa* in its meaning "the smallest unit of time measurement" is not typically associated with the reckoning of ritual time in the *MBh* or texts prior to it.

9.27. *having thoroughly scrubbed away all blemishes from my Mind: sunirṇiktātmakalmaṣaḥ.* I believe the word *ātman* here means essentially the Higher Mind, which comes, in time, in some circles, to be consistently referred to as buddhi. The basic reason for taking it this way here is the recognizable progression from *indriyas* ("sense faculties"), to *saṃkalpas* ("wishes, desires, plans, ambitions"; frequently an operation of the "Lower Mind," the manas), to "blemishes" on or in the *ātman*. The Higher Mind is typically a repository, or the locus, where various enduring character attributes exist and perdure. It has been usual to translate words referring to this Higher Mind with "Intellect" and segregate that from "Mind," which usually translates *manas* in contexts where this theme of psychology occurs. But "intellect" is a more restricted term than "mind," though often connoting a "higher" faculty than "mind." "Intellect" is generally restricted to cognitive activities in a way that the Sāṃkhya *buddhi* and analogous terms are not. In fact, buddhi and its analogs conspicuously comprehend the entire gamut of the inner life of persons. And in contexts where this differentiation is made, manas is typically more "intellectual" than buddhi; the manas coordinates and synthesizes the cognitive impressions of the senses (it also comes to be the coordinator of the outgoing volitional impulses that move the active faculties).

9.30–35. *Some men:* This passage turns upon the themes of agency (*kartṛtva*) and "cause" (*kāraṇa*) and "effect" (*kārya*). But while the first two of these terms are reasonably clear, exactly how *kārya* works needs further study. Most of the time in the *MBh* the word *kārya* functions simply as a gerundive (something "must be done") and as a nominalized gerundive (a person's "task, duty, business," or even "mission"). But the word comes to be used also as a noun meaning "something that will be made, or effected" (*kṛta*) through some action (*karman*); that is, an "effect." In several passages in the *MBh* the sense of "effect" is very abstract (see, e.g., *BhG* 13.20 and *MBh* 12.326.37, 45). But it is less so here (in both 12.9.30c and 32d) and at 3.178.14 and 9.64.18. My interpretation here is plausible, but closer study of these and related concepts is called for.

9.30. *who are a fusion of both the effects of their past deeds and the causes of future ones: kāryakāraṇasaṃśliṣṭaṃ svajanaṃ nāma bibhrati.* "Our people"—that is a person's kin, with their particular nature, occupation, and status in the world—are "ours," as effects (*kārya-s*) of our past deeds. Our connections to our family and kin are fundamental reasons (*kāraṇa-s*) for our doing wholesome and unwholesome deeds (*kuśalākuśalāni . . . karmāṇi*). Thus they are also "causes" of our rebirth and continued existence.

9.31. *one takes its evil, for that is the result of a deed done, and it belongs to the doer of the deed: pratigṛhṇāti tatpāpaṃ kartuḥ karmaphalaṃ hi tat.* According to the theme of karma at work here, one takes that body's good deeds as well, but few would object to that, and no great point needs to be made of that.

9.33. *this worthless rebirth . . . which will come to no good end: asāram imam asvantaṃ saṃsāram.* See the note to 11.3.4 for an explanation of the word *sāra*, the base of *asāra*, "worthless," here. Regarding "rebirth," *saṃsāra*, see the notes to 11.3.16, 4.6, and 6.5.

9.34 (1). *When Gods fall from heaven . . . :* Yudhiṣṭhira is evidently referring to the frequent motif of Indra's fall from power (e.g., see *MBh* 5.10 ff., van Buitenen, 3: 204 ff.) and, perhaps, to the fall of his ancestor the great king-seer Nahuṣa, who rose to heaven in Indra's place only to fall to earth as a snake (see *MBh* 5.11 ff., van Buitenen, 3: 207 ff. and *MBh* 3.175–178, van Buitenen, 2: 560 ff.). Interestingly, Yudhiṣṭhira learned a bit about the theory of action and the continued existence of acts from Nahuṣa, in the form of a snake, when he encountered him in the *The Book of the Forest* episode (see 3.178, which, as mentioned in the general note to 9.30–35 above, contains a use of *kārya* similar to that found in this passage). But some of the particular themes of *karman* that he mentions here are mentioned a little later in the *The Book of the Forest*, at 3.181, where the seer Mārkaṇḍeya teaches Yudhiṣṭhira. There are interesting allusions to the fall of Indra in a set of texts about rulers falling from power that occurs at 12.215–21. See the note at 11.1.31 for mention of another aspect of this set of texts.

9.34 (2). *what man . . . would want to continue in existence?: ko hi nāma bhavenārthī.* The word *bhava* can mean prosperity and supremacy as well as existence—Nīlakaṇṭha glosses it with "lordship of heaven," an apparent allusion to the fall of Indra, mentioned above. His interpretation is not implausible, but I prefer the universality implicit in taking *bhava* here as "existence in general," that is, as a virtual synonym of *saṃsāracakra*, the "wheel of rebirths," mentioned above in stanza 32. That universality connects well with the universality of the immediately preceding stanza, 33.

9.35. *his smallest royal actions: pārthivaiḥ . . . svalpaiḥ.* I construe *pārthiva* as an adjective, "princely, royal," in order to interpret the point here consistently with the foregoing. Nīlakaṇṭha, followed by Ganguli, takes it in its more usual sense of "prince," or "king," construing "the king is hemmed in by petty kings for various reasons (such as his sloth, their flattery, etc.)." He takes the word *kāraṇa*, "cause (of future existence)" in a way that is inconsistent with its immediately prior use in this speech.

10.1. *[Your mind has] been ruined by rote learning. You are like some dull, unimaginative scholar of the Veda!* The first three pādas of this śloka quote Kuntī's message to Yudhiṣṭhira, sent through Kṛṣṇa, at 5.130.6. See the note above to 12.7.5.

10.4. Text Amendment: First of all, we should read *vidāma* in 4b instead of *vidyāma*. This reading is found in two good manuscripts, $K_{1.4}$ (the Śāradā manuscript is missing), it is paralleled by the very close reading *vindāma* in the excellent D_1, and it is *lectio difficilior*. I take *vidāma* to be an augmentless aorist form of the root √*vid, vind, vindati* ("to find, discover"), which furnishes denotatively the same sense of the past as the conditional verbs in 5, which I take to be the main verbs of the entire utterance. It could be argued that there is no need to amend Belvalkar's text here: for, (1) we can construe the present tense verb Belvalkar does read, *vidyāma*, to convey the past sense of the verbs of the main clauses; and (2) it is also the case that *vidyāma* could, on purely morphological grounds, be taken as the optative mood of the perfect stem of the root √*vid, vetti* ("know"), which would also give us the past tense denotatively. I prefer *vidāma* because it is well attested, a denotatively past verb, and is not an archaism. The original suggestion that *vidāma* is preferable to *vidyāma* comes from Patrick Olivelle (personal communication).

Secondly, *vadhiṣyāma* ("we would [not] have killed") in 4d can be seen as simply an augmentless form of the conditional and thus parallel to the perfectly regular conditionals in 5. And *grahīṣyāmas* ("we would [not] have taken up [weapons]") in 4c, is a future-tense form used in an optative sense, but it picks up the past sense of the other conditional verbs in 4b and 5cd.

10.4–5. Technical Note: *Had we learned that your mind was disposed this way:* There is some confusion regarding verb endings and tenses in these two stanzas. Is the manuscript tradition

highly garbled? Did the author of the passage compose with erroneous grammar (which does happen in the *MBh*)? Or did the author put bad grammar in Bhīma's mouth to make him sound excited and inarticulate? I think what we have here is simply irregular grammar, though there is some lingering suspicion that the authors are deliberately exaggerating Bhīma's character for effect, as they do often.

10.18. *Thus those who are sophisticated do not recognize renunciation here: tasmād iha kṛtaprajñās tyāgaṃ na paricakṣate.* The immediately preceding stanza sanctions renunciation (even for kṣatriyas, presumably, in light of the condition "cheated by one's enemies"); the point of the current stanza is to say that, in spite of what the preceding stanza allows, renunciation is still not appropriate "here and now" (*iha*), that is, for Yudhiṣṭhira in these particular circumstances.

10.19 (1). *You ought to continue despising that: tad eva nindann āsīta.* The reading of stanza 19 is quite uncertain; the tradition here is garbled. But Belvalkar's reading gives a good sense if one is careful to consider what *tad* (that), the object of the participle *nindan* (despising), refers to. Obviously it is not renunciation in general, but the allegedly inappropriate renunciation that Yudhiṣṭhira has proposed. In the past Bhīma has expressed a somewhat cavalier attitude toward Law (see *MBh* 3.34.5 ff. and 11.14.2 ff.), but here he tries to persuade Yudhiṣṭhira by appealing directly to Law and by citing Yudhiṣṭhira's previous scorn for any deviation from Law. Yudhiṣṭhira is very close to those doctrines that deny the general value of the learning of the brahmins and the efficacy of their rites, doctrines referred to sometimes as *nāstikya* ("saying it [some unseen entity such as the enduring energy of a rite, or the presence of an eternal soul] does not exist"), "Naysaying." Yudhiṣṭhira has previously argued (see 3.32.2 ff.) strict fidelity to Law regardless of its apparent utility or futility, and at 3.32.1 he labeled as "*nāstikya*" Draupadī's discontent with Law and the God who arranges worldly matters (which is how she had expressed her discontent in chapter 3.31). It is this history, and the possibility that the *tad* in 19c might actually designate or imply *nāstikya*, that makes Bhīma's "you ought to continue despising that" fully intelligible here.

10.19 (2). *otherwise you are placing your trust in others: śraddhā vānyatra gṛhyate.* The word *śraddhā*, the etymological meaning of which is probably "set one's heart on" (see Hans-Werbin Köhler, *Śrad-dhā in der vedischen und altbuddhistischen Literatur*, 2), refers here to the king's confidence (or lack thereof) in the learning, work, and teaching of those brahmins of "complete wisdom" and "subtle insight" just mentioned by Bhīma. This confidence or trust entails his relying upon them, believing their teachings, accepting their guidance, and willingly giving them material support (see Köhler, *Śrad-dhā*, 38 ff.) For a close parallel use, see 12.159.22. For other important senses of the word, see 12.28.41 and the note thereto.

10.20. *unbelieving Naysayers: nāstikas.*

10.26. *within one's own accumulation of past deeds: ātmabhāgyeṣu.* The word *bhāgya* refers to one's "portion" or "destiny," frequently understood, as here, to be made up of, or conditioned by one's prior deeds, one's karma.

10.27. *Aquatic creatures: audakāḥ sṛṣṭayaś caiva jantavaḥ.* Literally, "the beings that are the aquatic emanations, or creatures (of cosmogenesis)." The idea here is similar to that of ślokas 24 and 25, which ridiculed claims made for the renunciatory life by pointing out similarities observed with mountains and trees that do not produce perfection in those things. The point here seems to be that if the individuality (or, as Bhīma virtually says earlier, the selfishness) of the renunciatory life were truly effective, then aquatic creatures should have that perfection because of the thorough individuality of their lives.

11.0. This chapter is a eulogy of the householder as the true ascetic. It is a parallel of the Vighāsa Jātaka (Jātaka no. 393). It and several elements of its background have been studied carefully by Albrecht Wezler in *Die wahren "Speiseresteesser"* (Skt. vighasāśin). Wezler's study was the subject of a contentious exchange in *WZKSA* 24 and 25 (1980 and 1981), when H. Bodewitz criticized Wezler's approach and some of his analyses, and Wezler responded in his own defense.

11.4. *Those who eat remnants do something that is very hard for humans to do: suduṣkaraṃ manuṣyaiś ca yat kṛtaṃ vighasāśibhiḥ.* Wezler shows that the word *vighasa-*, "left-over food," refers first to carrion (as clearly indicated, for example, at *MBh* 12.17.8); *vighasa* is food that others will "pick over" ("pick off the carcass") after an earlier eater has eaten. As some ascetics

ate such carrion-leavings as a difficult act of asceticism, the idea of having *vighasa-* for food became one more mode of extreme, ascetic behavior (such as celibacy) subject to metaphoric application and adaptation in the householder setting. The general rhetorical point of the chapter is to argue that householders, not literal renouncers (caricatured as the boys in this parody), are the true practitioners of heroically difficult forms of behavior.

11.6. *The seers said:* At times the word *ṛṣi* is used to mean little more than "brahmin," but here the full, most exalted meaning (a man gifted with the power to see the Gods and other transcendent mysteries and who has then bestowed some gift of his vision [e.g., a hymn of the Veda, a teaching about the sacrifice] upon later generations) seems intended with delicious irony.

11.7. *who eat left-over scraps: ucchiṣṭabhojinaḥ.* This phrase is a reference to renouncers' eating carrion.

11.14 (1). *Accomplishment: siddhi,* a term that is often used to describe the "completion, perfection, or attainment" sought by ascetics such as these young men. In such contexts I ordinarily render the term with "perfection"; I use "accomplishment" here because the bird is trying to use the term to assimilate the language of ascetics to the language of ritualists and householders.

11.14 (2). *The months of the year . . . and the seasons:* Three extensions of time—months, fortnights, seasons—and the three different celestial lights that mark those times—sun, moon, stars. Beings depend upon this ordering of time and the celestial bodies which mark it, and those bodies in turn depend upon the rituals.

11.15. *a vast place of pious labor: āśramo mahān.* The basic meaning of the word *āśrama* is "religious exertion," and it is used in two important, distinct senses in the *MBh* and ancient Brahminical literature generally. In the words of Patrick Olivelle, "It refers to both a residence for and a mode of life devoted to religious exertion" (*Āśrama System*, 17; see 8–24, for a comprehensive discussion of the word and its earliest meanings). Here the term is used to refer to the householder way of life in a way that is interesting in the *MBh*, as it does not mention or even imply the more developed theme of the four *āśramas*.

11.18 (1). *Let this be the asceticism you take up:* The application of the rhetoric of rigorous asceticism (*tapas*) to ritual and domestic religious activities here and later on in this ethical debate is serious and substantive; it is not merely a superficial matter of language.

11.18 (2). Technical Note: *So: tasmāt,* most literally "from (or because of) that." It is not clear what this conjunctive pronoun indicating consequence is doing here. Normally the word is not superfluous. Nor do I think it possible to construe it as a complement to the participle *adhyavasataḥ* (see the next note). I have translated it literally, as a vague conjunction, for want of a better understanding. Conceivably this *tasmāt* is a "thread" dangling as a result of this verse having been cut from a more original context and spliced into this one. While such cutting and splicing did go on in the fashioning of these texts, interpreters need to be wary of excusing themselves from hard work by resorting to such explanations too quickly.

11.18 (3). Technical Note: *for one who is resolved upon it: adhyavasataḥ,* a reading which is difficult and uncertain. I take this genitive participle as a metrically abbreviated form of *adhyavasyataḥ* (from *adhi-ava-√so*), which I take (bearing in mind the collateral verbs *ava-√so* and *vi-ava-√so*) to mean "finish" in the sense "decide, make a determination, resolve upon." The reading of the Southern manuscripts, *adhyāvasataḥ*, "of one who dwells" (at home, presumably), makes things easier (it might yield the sense "So, ascetic, that is regarded as the asceticism of one living at home"). But the Southern reading is obviously *lectio facilior*, and must derive from the more problematic reading, rather than being the source of it.

11.19. *service to one's teacher: guroś caryām.* Because this stanza describes the responsibilities of a householder, not those of a student, the "teacher" (*guru*) envisioned here may be not simply an individual's tutor in the Vedas, but rather a brahmin with some institutional and public following, and perhaps some sort of "ministry." For an example of such a teacher, see Vyāsa's position in relation to King Janaka in *MBh* 12.312–13. Also, some of the brahmins associated with particular "bathing shrines" (*tīrthas*) in *The Tour of the Sacred Fords (Tīrthayātrāparvan)* of Book 3 of the *MBh* (van Buitenen, 2: 366 ff.) may have been such "teachers."

11.22. *seers who have passed beyond the pairs of opposites and are disinterested* (vimatsara): Indra here skillfully invokes the image of men who are exemplary ideals for these renouncing boys. The latter attribute is important for, he implies, seers who do still feel *matsara* (selfishness, envy, resentment, or jealousy) might not admit to the very real asceticism Indra here claims for the householding life. I have translated *vimatsara* here a bit more abstractly, "disinterested," in order to suggest this last point explicitly. Shortly below, in śloka 26, *vimatsara* is used to describe these exemplary, ascetic householders, and I translate it normally as "unselfish."

11.25. *sincere: anupaskṛta,* which Nīlakaṇṭha glosses with *niḥsaṃśaya,* "free of doubt," which only makes sense here if it is interpreted atypically as "not causing any doubt," that is, "sincere, straightforward, ingenuous," a sense that corresponds well with the usual glosses of *anupaskṛta.*

11.26. *everlasting years: śāśvatīr varṣāḥ.* The word *śāśvata* occurs in this chapter with unusual frequency. I have not varied the translation ("everlasting") because I think this peculiarity of diction may well have been deliberate and so should not be obscured by the translation, even though the word soon cloys, and even though "everlasting years" is a bit strange in English. Normally I render this phrase with "years without end."

12.3. *Viśākhayūpa:* A name that means literally, "having a ritual tying-post that is free of branches." Animals to be killed in sacrifices were tied to the *yūpa* located in the sacrificial area. Viśākhayūpa was a sacred place in the north; see the LCP.

12.8. *a 'renouncer motivated by Darkness': sa tyāgī tāmasaḥ.* A reference to the theme of the three *guṇas,* the three Attributes of "Nature," *prakṛti,* namely, *sattva,* "Lightness," *rajas,* "Energy," and *tamas,* "Darkness." In Sāṃkhya theory, all things, including the psychic elements of sentient beings, are made up of elements that reflect differing proportions of these three "Attributes of Fundamental Nature." A person's dispositions and character are a reflection of the balance of these Attributes in his or her "Higher Mind" (typically, buddhi). Nakula here characterizes premature renunciation as the act of a man with a preponderance of *tamas,* Darkness. Cataloging character traits and behavior in terms of these Attributes occurs at numerous places in the *MBh,* as for example in Chapters 17 and 18 of the *BhG.*

12.14. *one of those devious "bird-catchers" out there snaring Merit: dharmavaitaṃsiko 'nṛjuḥ.* Biting criticism of renouncers! A *vaitaṃsika* is a bird-catcher (from *vitaṃsa,* "snare, cage, trap"), a man of the forest, like many who renounce, and probably also a man from some tribal people. Nīlakaṇṭha glosses the term *dharma-vaitaṃsika,* "dharma-trapper," or "dharma-snarer" as *dharmadhvajin,* "hypocrite," someone who "flies the flag of dharma (insincerely)," and he is right, I believe. There is a clear imputation of hypocrisy here in addition to the likely reference to a despised ethnic group. The typical charge of hypocrisy leveled at renouncers by those arguing against renunciation is that some, or all, of those who have renounced their homes and gone to the forest are, in spite of their goal of transcending desires and all actions done to accomplish those desires, still desirous (e.g., 12.13.2 and 10, 15.24–25 and 27, and 18.7 ff. below, or *BhG* 3.4–6). In this case the charge is that they are still pursuing those good works (dharma) that will guarantee them a good life in the next world.

But the real point of the contrast developed in stanzas 12–14 is that unlike the "true renouncer"—the *householder* who looks pleasures, desires, squarely in the face and deals with them without fleeing them, without giving up the householder Law—these pseudo-renouncers have not really forsaken desires, though they have fled them. And when these naive men actually do confront pleasures, desires, the King of Death then grabs them by the throat. That is, they become slaves of their desires. Is it reaching too far to speculate that this essentially philosophical point might also turn upon some interactions between tribal peoples of the forest and the agricultural and urban people in their midst? On the philosophical point, recall, 11.4.8–9.

12.18. *never suffers disruption in anything at all: nocchittir vidyate kvacit.* The word *ucchitti* means "destruction, disruption, or dissolution," but the context does not allow us to know whether the disruption that this pious man never experiences is "general disruption" of himself, or the disruption of one of his important possessions or concerns, such as his store of good deeds or the continuity of his lineage (in the *MBh* and *Rām.* cognates of *ucchitti* occur several times in such senses). *ŚB* 14.7.3.15, which is 4.5.14 in the commonly translated Kāṇva recension of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad,* insists that the *ātman* never undergoes *ucchitti,* but that passage does not help resolve this one. Three-quarters of this stanza, including the indeterminate *ucchitti,* reoccurs below at 12.12.34.

12.21. *Those rites of sacrifice constrain the man living in the householder pattern of life: tac ca yajñakarma virodhakam.* That is, the householder *āśrama* requires great resolution, effort, and diligence. Nīlakaṇṭha glosses *virodhaka* with *nigaḍavat;* the rites of sacrifice impede one "like leg irons."

12.24. *who has become* brahman: *brahmabhūta.* I think R. C. Zaehner's comments on this word at *BhG* 5.24 are apt (see his *The Bhagavad Gītā,* 214–15); Zaehner's always thoughtful and provocative commentary is particularly valuable because it is grounded in his study of the Pāli Buddhist texts as well as the Brahmin texts immediately antecedent to the *MBh.* "The phrase *brahma-bhūta* seems to have been taken on in the Gītā in its Buddhist sense of entering a form of existence which is unconditioned by space, time, and causation. . . . The phrase too is common in the *MBh.* in general and is equivalent to 'becoming immortal' (e.g., 5.42.5: 12.232.18). Whereas most men become *brahma-bhūta* (this being a synonym of liberation), Krishna is always *brahma-bhūta* (13.6817, 6875 [vulgate]) and was so born in his present incarnation (13.6838 [vulgate]). Similarly at the beginning of each world-cycle all men are *brahma-bhūta* (3.181.12)."

12.34. *a brahmin man: brāhmaṇa.* As we have here one kṣatriya trying to persuade another kṣatriya, we must either understand "brahmin" as a description of a person's inner nature, or, if we take "brahmin" as "biologically descended from brahmins," we must then view the stanza as incompletely assimilated into this context. Note that three-quarters of this stanza are identical with 12.12.18 above. In 12.12.18 the third pāda reads "zealous renouncer, . . ." where this stanza has "Great king, a brahmin man. " At the next occurrence of the word *brāhmaṇa* (at 12.14.15), Draupadī contrasts it sharply with "king."

13.0. Sahadeva's speech consists of a complex series of binary oppositions (some explicit, some implicit) woven, or lumped, together: Outside vs. inside the person; forest-life vs. kingship; death vs. everlasting *brahman;* personal possessiveness vs. detachment; mortal soul vs. immortal soul; and one's deeds have no significant consequences vs. one's deeds are effective and consequential. The exact way these oppositions are interconnected is far from perfectly clear in every instance, though the overall pattern is plain enough. I would synthesize Sahadeva's points in this way: (1) Yudhiṣṭhira should rule as king, having renounced absolutely the possessiveness that is within himself; (2) souls are immortal, so deeds are important; (3) in sum, if he follows this advice, his life will be fruitful, and he will enjoy the immortality of *brahman.*

13.1. *some part of oneself: śārīraṃ dravyam.* Literally, *śārīram* is "within, or of, the body (*śarīra*)," and its meaning is not obvious on its face. I interpret it as I do because of its opposition to "some thing outside oneself" (*bāhyaṃ dravyam*). The contrast here is similar to the one Nakula made just above, at 12.33, between internal and external renunciation ("That man who renounces—*both inside and outside" [antar bahiś ca . . . parityājya]*).

13.4. *Now Death would consist of two syllables, the Everlasting brahman of three:* The two syllables *mama* ("I have," or "It's mine") are Death; and the three syllables *na mama* ("It's not mine," or "I have nothing") are Everlasting *brahman.* The first alternative is the attitude of desire, attachment, and possession; it leads to action, death, rebirth, and death again. The second alternative is the attitude disavowing desire, eschewing attachment, and cultivating detachment; it leads to the ultimate, immortal reality that is *brahman.*

13.5. *they most certainly cause beings to struggle: adṛśyamānau bhūtāni yodhayetām asaṃśayam.* The translation of the words is no problem, but what do they mean? My translation is deliberately as flat and ambiguous as the text, because I find it impossible to choose one of three possible kinds of conflict Sahadeva may here intend. The following two stanzas, 6 and 7, complicate matters a lot. Śloka 6 suggests actual physical warfare, and 7, by its juxtaposition to 6, suggests the struggle of controversy. Were it not for these suggestions I would be inclined to interpret the struggle mentioned in 5 as metaphorical conflict, as "war" within a person (see below at 12.16.20 ff. and 12.17 for such a clear instance of such an inner *yuddha,* "war," within Yudhiṣṭhira), particularly a struggle within Yudhiṣṭhira between the death stemming from possessiveness and the immortality of true renunciation and detachment. Nīlakaṇṭha interprets the verb here to mean that the coexistence of death and

everlasting *brahman* within persons causes controversy—scholars dispute whether a person's active soul *("kartā ātmā")* is mortal or immortal. The parallel occurrence of stanzas from this passage at *MBh* 14.13.1–8 does not really help in determining all the details of its continuity.

13.6. *when their bodies have been shattered: bhittvā śarīraṃ bhūtānām.* I have translated the gerund passively because the text does not make clear who or what is the agent shattering the bodies of beings. It could well be Death. On the other hand, this could be a reference to making war, and the agent of the shattering could be a human warrior (viz. Yudhiṣṭhira, in the Bhārata war). In either case, if the soul is immortal, no harm befalls it upon the destruction of the body.

13.7. *simultaneous origination of them: sahotpattiḥ.*

13.8. *he... should renounce absolutely: ekāntam utsṛjya* (a gerund phrase specifying a required condition, which I have transformed into a separate clause). That is, make the true, essential, renunciation of inner possessiveness and get upon the ancient, pious path of actions, which is not vain, since the soul is not destroyed when the body is.

13.11. *the essential reality of things that are within and things that are without: bāhyābhyantarabhūtānāṃ svabhāvam.*

14.6. *cuckooing monotonously: vāvāśyamānās,* the intensive of a verb that is used to designate a wide variety of different animal sounds, including cows' lowing and birds' squawking.

14.18. Text Amendment: *and certainly not by cowering down: na saṃkocena cāpy uta.* The learned editor Belvalkar has emended the manuscript tradition in pāda d, reading *notkocena tathāpyuta,* "nor by bribery." I think his emendation is unwarranted, however, and as it makes a substantial difference in what the text says, I have amended his text by adopting the reading, *na saṃkocena (cāpyuta)* ("and certainly not by cowering down"), that is found in the great majority of manuscripts, Northern and Southern alike.

14.19 (1). *that bristled with eager heroes: (balam) vīrasamudyatam,* with the natural order of the elements of the compound inverted.

14.19 (2). *that was greater by three components:* I do not know how to interpret Draupadī's "three components" that made the Kaurava army greater than the Pāṇḍava army. Nīlakaṇṭha says it refers to three kinds of capability—leadership, counsel, and energy—but he does not connect this interpretation to anything specific in the Kaurava army. It cannot refer to the actual superiority of the Kauravas in the number of "armies" or "divisions," unless Draupadī was being made to appear erroneous for some effect (as was, for example, Gāndhārī at 11.14.12; see the note to that passage), for the Kauravas' actual superiority over the Pāṇḍavas was four armies, not three.

14.22–25. *you crushed with your rod the continent of Jambū...*: Draupadī's enumeration of Yudhiṣṭhira's conquests is interesting, but it is somewhat puzzling. Her list must be intended as a reference to Yudhiṣṭhira's conquest of the four directions prior to staging the Royal Consecration (see *MBh* 2.23–29, van Buitenen, 2: 76 ff.), but the geographic conceptions of that account and this one are entirely different. The geographic conception of this passage is closer to some of the themes found in the geographic descriptions prefaced to the account of the war (see *MBh* 6.4–14), but it does not correspond to them exactly either. Belvalkar was tempted to excise Draupadī's panegyric, but he correctly retained it, since it is found in all the manuscript traditions.

14.29. *the body's faculties:* A reference to the five faculties of action: voice, hands, feet, anus, and generative organ. Draupadī here affirms the value of her having five husbands by comparing her situation to the body's pleasing integration of its five different faculties.

15.9. *The brahmins' rod is in their speech: vāci daṇḍo brāhmaṇānām.* Nīlakaṇṭha, Arjunamiśra, and Belvalkar, the editor, all take the word *daṇḍa* here to mean the punishment the king inflicts upon each of the different *varṇas.* I think this reading misconstrues the sense of the word *daṇḍa* by limiting it too narrowly to "punishment." "Punishment" is the usual sense of the word in legal literature, but the current passage does not fall into that genre, though it bears upon legal themes. Their narrow reading of *daṇḍa* yields the absurdity which troubles all three learned men, namely, that pāda d *(nirdaṇḍaḥ śūdra ucyate,* "the śūdra is said to have no *daṇḍa*") would then proclaim that śūdras are not to be punished. The word *daṇḍa* in passages describing the king in the *MBh* has a broader and more concrete power of

signification than "punishment." It sometimes refers to the king's army, to his power to make war, as well as to his power to punish; and its concrete sense of "stick" or "rod" is often visible on or just below the surface. Its phallic likeness is plain when Draupadī, in the previous chapter (at 12.14.13–14), moved immediately from the suggestion that Yudhiṣṭhira was behaving like a eunuch to "A kṣatriya without a [or, the] rod [of rule] does not shine" *("nādaṇḍaḥ kṣatriyo bhāti")* and so on. I try to indicate this range of signification by generally rendering *daṇḍa* with "rod of rule," "(rod of) force," "(rod of) punishment," and so forth.

15.11. *kindly: sūnṛtaḥ.* Instead of the rather odd "kindly," several manuscripts from the North and the South (and the parallel occurrence at Manu 7.25) read "slaying the wicked" (*pāpahan*). But the ironic or deliberately paradoxical reading *sūnṛtaḥ* was obviously the correct choice here. Relevant to understanding the point here may be 12.15.49 below.

15.23. *You ought to live like the being you were produced to be: yathā sṛṣṭo 'si rājendra tathā bhavitum arhasi.* The word *sṛṣṭa,* "emitted" (from some material source, i.e., [emitted] from its material cause), is broadly analogous to "created" in the Western religions. But the Indian concept of *sṛṣṭi,* "emission," assumes material continuity between the source and what "comes from it" (the philosophical theme that "the effect already exists in its [material] cause," "*satkāryavāda,*" which plays a role in classical Sāṃkhya theory), while the Western religious theme of creation emphasizes the freestanding will and power of the creator, though now it seems the old Vulgate rendering in Genesis, "*ex nihilo,*" is inaccurate (personal communication from my colleague W. Lee Humphreys).

15.26. Technical Note: *their bodies can be destroyed: skandhaparyayaḥ,* interpreted according to Nīlakaṇṭha's gloss "*dehasya viparyayaḥ.*" BR records the sense of "body" for the word *skandha* only in Jain texts, but we seem definitely to have that sense here.

15.33. *become amenable to the king's use: bhogāya kalpante.* The word *bhoga* refers most generally to the king's "use," "enjoyment," or "exploitation" of the assets and subjects of his kingdom.

15.38. *individual possession: mamatva,* most literally, "mine-ness."

15.47. *Men possessed of Royal Splendor: śrīmantaḥ.* By itself this stanza seems to signify *śrī* only in the sense of riches or personal splendor, but the preceding stanza's declaration of the theme of kingship limits *śrī* here to its particularly royal sense. See the note to 12.1.12.

15.55. *would not become a brahmicide: na tena bhrūṇahā syāt.* I interpret this stanza and the ambiguous term *bhrūṇahan* (it basically means "fetus-killer," but is also a synonym for *brahmahan,* "brahmin-killer") in accordance with parallel verses in the *MBh* and Dharmaśāstra literature (see *MBh* 12.35.16–19 and 56.30 and Manu 8.350–51). Some of these parallels make explicitly clear that the attacker is a brahmin and sometimes even use the term *brahmahan* instead of *bhrūṇahan* in the main clause. Sheldon Pollock takes *bhrūṇahan* literally ("one who has slain an unborn child") in a different kind of context at *Rām.* 2.66.38 (Goldman, ed., *Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki*), but brahmicide seems more likely to me there as well. See *HDhŚ,* 2, pt. 1: 148–49 for a brief discussion of this topic.

16.7. *I will make an argument to get you to rule: rājyaṃ prati janādhipa / hetum atra pravakṣyāmi.* Given that the following speech ends up with Bhīma's trying to arouse Yudhiṣṭhira's anger, one might think the word *hetu* ("argument") might be better taken as "motive": "I'll give you a motive for ruling." But I think the whole speech that follows is an organic whole, the medical maxims (ślokas 8–16) included. Bhīma's provoking his brother's anger hinges upon his sarcastically repeating the phrase "you should not recall" in ślokas 17 and 18, and that phrase is linked to his earlier recitation of the therapeutic medical maxims (admittedly, the phrase is used ironically; see my note to 12.16.17 below). Bhīma does, I suspect, mean to say that he will give the king a motive (*hetu,* namely angry recollection) to drop his remorse and rule, but that motive is embedded in an interesting argument (*hetu.*)

16.15–20. *You ought not recall...*: Śloka 15 is obscure, and I am not sure of the interpretation. I do think that M. Ganguli was probably correct when he noted with regard to this entire passage, "The argument seems to be this: if it is thy nature to call back thy woes even when happiness is before thee, why dost thou not then recollect the insult to your wife? The recollection of this insult will fill thee with wrath and convince thee that in slaying thy foes... thou hast acted very properly."

16.17. *You saw Kṛṣṇā . . . you should not recall that:* It seems that Bhīma is being made to seem deliberately ironic here. As Ganguli suggested (see the note above), Bhīma is reminding Yudhiṣṭhira of certain earlier miseries with the unstated purpose of angering him. But he is flying directly in the face of the therapeutic advice he has just given. The irony is dispensed with at 19d, when he asks impatiently, "How have you forgotten . . . ?" There was a conspicuous absence of any reference to the past when Bhīma praised Yudhiṣṭhira's knowledge at 12.16.6 ("There is nothing in the present or the future you do not know, lord!"). Bhīma, on the other hand, frequently recalls the past, specifically the evils suffered by Draupadī, himself, and his brothers (e.g., see his recital after drinking Duḥśāsana's blood, *MBh* 8.61.11–14 (B. 8.83.43 ff.), and his brief, final summation to Draupadī at 10.16.25 ff. (B. 10.16.26 ff.); readers will also find interesting his uncharacteristic expression of forbearance at 5.72 and the following exchange between him and Kṛṣṇa in 5.73–75.

16.19. *Jaṭāsura:* See *MBh* 3.154 (B. 3.157; van Buitenen, 2: 514 ff.) for the encounter with Jaṭāsura; 3.233–35 (B. 3.244–46; van Buitenen, 2: 683 ff.) for the fight with Citrasena; 3.248–56 (B. 3.264–72; van Buitenen, 2: 706 ff.) for Jayadratha's kidnapping of Draupadī; and 4.13–22 (B. 4.14–23; van Buitenen, 3: 46 ff.) for the incident with Kīcaka.

16.25 *Fortunately you have followed the lead of Draupadī's tresses: draupadyāḥ keśapakṣasya diṣṭyā tvaṃ padavīṃ gataḥ.* I believe the editor Belvalkar is correct when he sees this statement as Bhīma's approving Yudhiṣṭhira's participation in the revenge that his brothers (in *MBh* 2.68) and then Draupadī (at *MBh* 2.71.18–20) pledged against the Kaurava villains who molested her during the dicing match. This pledge of revenge is frequently signified in the *MBh* by Draupadī's unbound hair (she is often described as *muktakeśī*, "her hair unbound"). See Alf Hiltebeitel, "Draupadī's Hair," and the first note to 11.9.10.

17.0. Yudhiṣṭhira speaks here in a kind of soliloquy in which he addresses himself aloud, audible to the others (I think this in spite of the vocative expression in 4b). The first ten stanzas contain an alternating debate that represents the inner struggle (*yuddha*) Bhīma has just told Yudhiṣṭhira he must enter. The "first voice" of the debate represents his ascetic point of view; the second, the side of him that sympathizes with his wife and brothers. I mark the second voice of this debate with quotation marks. From śloka 11 on there is but the one voice of Yudhiṣṭhira preaching a sermon to himself, encouraging the renunciatory point of view.

17.7. *prosperity: yoga* and *kṣema*, literally "working and then resting," "acquiring wealth and enjoying it," or, according to Professor Stanley Insler in a private communication, originally "war and peace."

17.9 (1). *but kings are never satisfied:* Even though they often expand their realms *(viṣaya-s)* through conquering tracts of land (see above 12.17.5ef.). The word *viṣayas* (realms) here also signifies "realms of enjoyment." For individual persons, these *viṣayas* are the five objects of the senses *(indriyārtha-s)*, which are often pleasant to the organs of sense; for the king, his realm is to be used, exploited, enjoyed *(bhojya)*, and made fruitful for himself and his subjects.

17.9 (2). *Look at the difference between their Minds: paśya buddhyantaraṃ yathā.* A viable interpretation of this pāda is "Look how it is right here in my own mind." Understood this way, the pāda represents the ascetic voice of Yudhiṣṭhira's soliloquy pointing to the raging dialectic going on in his own mind; that inner dialectic exemplifies exactly the point that 9abc makes—"good *yatis* shrink their world, while kings (always enlarge theirs and) are never satisfied." I prefer the translation I have given in the text because it is more immediately satisfying, while the one I have suggested here is comparatively a bit too clever and a little forced.

17.10. *they win only this hell: tair ayaṃ narako jitaḥ*—as opposed to the Heavenly realms, *loka-s*, that extraordinary deeds normally "win." "This hell" evidently refers to the misery of this ascetic life.

17.16 (1). *a fetter to the world: bandhanaṃ loke;* attachment (more often *saṅga* in the *MBh*) is what seems meant here.

17.16 (2). *similarly objects of enjoyment have been declared to be karma:* I take this statement to mean that such objects of enjoyment, or "prizes" (*āmiṣa-s*), as the kingdom are tantamount to the accumulation of karma that keeps one in the round of rebirths. Yudhiṣṭhira has briefly mentioned or alluded to rebirth and escaping it in earlier declarations within this family

argument, but the current context marks the first serious appearance of the theme of *mokṣa* in *The Book of Peace.*

17.20. *Understanding is said to come from complete awareness, and that comes from having discriminative knowledge of things not usually known: ajñātānāṃ ca vijñānāt saṃbodhād buddhir ucyate;* 20cd offers a considered characterization of the important intellectual organ buddhi. See the note above to *MBh* 11.1.36–37 for more on this idea.

17.21. Technical Note: *who have been stimulated to become* brahman: *brahmabhāvaprasūtānām*, the past passive participle from ²√*su, sáviti* in BR. Notice of this important participle is completely missing in MW.

17.22. Technical Note: *diffusion: vistāra* for *vistara*, for the sake of the meter.

18.14. Technical Note: *that others depend upon:* I take the compound *paratantra* in a sense different from its usual one. Normally it is a "possessive compound" (*bahuvrīhi*) that means literally "having another (*para*) as one's principal support," "dependent upon another." Reading the compound here as a "dependent compound" (*tatpuruṣa*, Whitney's terminology) meaning "being the principal support of another, or others" is consistent with the queen's argument about Janaka's letting down all those who depended upon him.

18.20b. Text Amendment: *this kind support: anugraha.* I have adopted the well-founded majority reading *dhānāmuṣṭir anugrahaḥ* for Belvalkar's *dhānāmuṣṭiparigrahaḥ* (attested in only two manuscripts, K_3 and D_4, which normally play only supporting roles in the manuscript chorus).

The queen suggests that Janaka's philosophy is inconsistent, if not hypocritical. By asking, "How would you feel toward someone who broke . . . ," the queen suggests he has the usual sorts of human attachments to items of his renouncer's accoutrement. By bringing up the handful of grain (Nīlakaṇṭha says that it is "fried, or roasted, barley corns" [*bhṛṣṭayavāḥ*]) he clutches, she repeats her implication and then adds to it (see the next note).

18.20d. *what are you giving to me?* This question is quite ambiguous. After considering a number of possibilities, I take it (as Belvalkar hints he did) to be a rhetorical question complaining that if he truly means what he says and holds everything to have no value at all, then she, as his wife, as one who depends upon him for support, will be sadly deprived.

18.20ef. *And if this handful of grain is your "wealth":* If, on the other hand, he does not mean what he says; if he truly regards the grain, meager though it be, as his property and wealth, then he is a hypocrite whose pledge is worthless.

18.24. *[they are] bad offerings; they are like a sacrificial offering made into a forest fire: dāvāgnāv iva durhutam.* A forest fire is not a fire consecrated for sacrificial purposes. The next stanza picks up on the relative insatiability of such fires.

18.25. *Just as fire does not die down, . . . so a brahmin . . . never becomes completely quiet within: jātavedā yathā . . . na . . . upaśāmyati . . . tathā śāmyati na dvijaḥ.* A fire naturally goes out only when it has completely consumed its fuel; a brahmin is like a fire, and one that always begs and receives will never lack for fuel and will never go out, will never become calm and passionless within. The root √*śam* here refers to the cooling down and going out of physical fires and the inner psychic fires as well. Thus verbs from this root also apply to persons who are cooling the fires of passion, attachment, and desire within—one of the basic processes of most renunciatory and yogic disciplines.

19.1–2. *My dear younger brother:* The reverberations of the angry confrontation at 8.48–49 [B. 8.68–69] are particularly sharp in the first eight ślokas of this chapter. In 8.48 Yudhiṣṭhira berated Arjuna at length for shirking his responsibility as the preeminent Pāṇḍava warrior. Arjuna drew his sword to strike off Yudhiṣṭhira's head, but Kṛṣṇa intervened, criticizing Arjuna's ignorance of dharma and praising Yudhiṣṭhira's knowledge of it. Here, one month later, Yudhiṣṭhira echoes Kṛṣṇa's criticism of Arjuna's ignorance, though now Yudhiṣṭhira balances criticism of Arjuna's ignorance (and praise of his own expertise in the teachings of dharma) by lauding Arjuna's skill as a warrior and praising his brotherly affection. Some of Kṛṣṇa's exact words are repeated here by Yudhiṣṭhira: 8bcd here is virtually an exact quotation ("You have not attended the elders. . . . [8.49.14b] You are not acquainted with the conclusions that those who know these things [the teachings of Law] in their compact and extensive forms have arrived at" [8.49.17ab]).

19.4. *if you do understand Law:* Yudhiṣṭhira refers to Arjuna's obligation as the younger brother to respect his elder brother.

19.9. *my dear older brother: tāta.* I attribute this statement to Arjuna and see an exchange between the brothers here, one that is continued later in the chapter (see 22 ff.). Of course the only reason to construe this as Arjuna speaking to Yudhiṣṭhira (*tāta* could also mean "my dear younger brother") is the meaning of the quoted sentence. Three norms are listed in ascending order of superiority—asceticism, renunciation, and ritual action (represented metonymically by *vidhi*, "injunction"). The purport of this statement represents the position of Arjuna and the other Pāṇḍavas, whereas Yudhiṣṭhira is arguing that the fullest or most complete dharma (see 12.7.37a) holds asceticism and renunciation to be best. Instead of *vidhi*, Nīlakaṇṭha reads the grammatically possible *avidhi*, "non-rule," which he seems to understand as "non-form, or non-structure," as he glosses this with *anirdeśyaṃ brahma*, "indescribable *brahman*." This is a forced solution; seeing Arjuna's voice here gives a straightforward interpretation that fits the context well. The prose speech markers "Arjuna said" (before 9) and "Yudhiṣṭhira said" (before 10) do not occur in the Pune text. Ordinarily I have not taken the liberty of inserting such markers on my own in instances where I believe an unmarked change of voice has occurred. I have done so in this chapter so as not to leave the drama of the brotherly exchange in the notes.

19.10. *when you think it means there is nothing better than wealth:* Wealth is a necessary prerequisite for performing the ritual injunctions, as Arjuna vigorously argued a little earlier, in Chapter 12.8. Yudhiṣṭhira refers to wealth here as a metonymic reference to the whole of Arjuna's ethical argument.

19.11–15. *Men devoted to Law:* Yudhiṣṭhira undertakes to explain the correct understanding of the text Arjuna quoted in 9a, renunciation (*tyāga*) is best. He lists four ethical paths in terms of the men who follow them and the destinations they reach: (1) Pious forest-dwellers who have no wealth and gain heaven by Veda-recitation (ślokas 11–12); (2) those who engage in some sort of meditational yoga and go to heaven by the northern path (śloka 13; see the next note for "the northern path"); (3) those whose life involves the performance of the prescribed rituals and who go to heaven by the southern path (śloka 14; see the next note for "the southern path"); (4) those who have gained Absolute Freedom (*mokṣa*) and go a way that is indescribable (śloka 15).

19.13–14. *the northern path . . . the path to the south, which you see as radiant:* An old distinction of two different, unequal fates a soul may experience after death. This distinction—based upon ancient oppositions of light vs. darkness, Gods vs. the spirits of the ancestors, sun vs. moon, summer solstice vs. winter solstice, and north vs. south—is well developed in the Upaniṣads (see *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* 5.10.1–6 and the parallel passage at *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* 6.2.15–16) and in the *Mahābhārata*, but is based on older Vedic themes—such as a distinction between a "path leading to the Gods" (*devayāna*) and the "path leading to the ancestors" (*pitṛyāṇa*; e.g., see *Ṛg Veda* 10.88.15–16, and 10.2.7 and 10.18.1; and see *HDhŚ*, 4: 189, n. 437, for other references to the "path of the Gods")—that are less well developed and less clear. The post-Vedic uses of this theme are frequently connected with the post-Vedic worldview of *saṃsāra* and the post-Vedic ethic by which some aim to gain *brahman* and *mokṣa* (Absolute Freedom, Escape). Souls that had escaped and gained the ultimate reality (basically through the cultivation of mystical knowledge in a *nivṛtti* way of life; for the terms *nivṛtti* and *pravṛtti*, see the note to *MBh* 12.6.12 above) were said, at *ChUp* 5.10.1–2, to travel by the "path of the Gods" (*devayāna*) which ends with *brahman*, the ultimate reality, as opposed to the "path of the ancestors" (*pitṛyāṇa*) traveled by those who follow a *pravṛtti* way of life (see *ChUp* 5.3.2) which leads eventually to rebirth on earth (*ChUp* 5.10.3–6). In this Upaniṣadic schema the path of the Gods was characterized by completeness, brightness, and increasing light, and a northern orientation. A soul on this path goes in succession to the flame of the cremation fire, the day, the fortnight of the waxing moon, the six months of the year (starting with the winter solstice and ending with the summer solstice) when the sun appears to climb northward (i.e., higher, in the sky), the year, the sun, the moon, lightning, and then *brahman*. On the other hand, the path of the ancestors was characterized by incompleteness, darkness, and decreasing light, and a southern orientation. The soul on this path goes in succession to the smoke of the cremation fire, the night, the fortnight of the waning moon, the six months of the year (starting with the summer solstice) when the sun appears to sink southward

(i.e., lower in the sky), the heaven of the ancestors, space, and the moon, from which they eventually return to another life on the earth.

Here (in 12.19.13c), consistent with the *nivṛtti* perspective of the Upaniṣads, Yudhiṣṭhira says that those noble ones who go by the northern path have abandoned the darkness that comes from non-understanding (*abuddhijaṃ tamas tyaktvā*), and then in the next stanza (14b) he says Arjuna sees that (dark) southern path as "radiant" (*bhāsvat*). He is referring to the glittering wealth and splendor of the path of *pravṛtti* that Arjuna urges him to embrace, and his contrast of light and dark here constitutes a sharp criticism.

But one must be wary of taking these themes in too rigid and formulaic a way. The Upaniṣads use the distinction dramatically, but they do so for their own *nivṛtti* purposes, and the *Mahābhārata* is frequently hostile to such a simple insistence upon *nivṛtti*. The "way of the ancestors" is a very positive idea in the Vedic literature (even in the *Chāndogya* and *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣads* it is a reward for good deeds and leads to a period of heavenly enjoyment; also there is a third and worse fate, which involves being born in subhuman bodies as a result of evil deeds; see *ChUp* 5.10.7–9), and there are still powerful echoes of that outlook in the *Mahābhārata*. One example displaying a relatively positive attitude toward the southern path occurs at 12.29.96 below, in Kṛṣṇa's praise of the sixteen kings. Of some (secondary-level) kings among the sixteen, Kṛṣṇa says that they, "offering sacrificial worship with Horse Sacrifices, went upon the southern course." It is true that by the time of the *MBh* the north is thoroughly regarded as an auspicious direction (it is the direction of Mount Meru, over which stands the fixed pole-star, and the direction of the mountains ascending up to the heavens and the Gods), and the south has corresponding inauspicious associations (it is the direction of demons and death, it is the realm of the ancestors and their king, Yama, the king of the dead), but my impression is that the negative sense of the southern direction is more vague and attenuated than is the positive sense of the northern direction.

19.14. *they are the same as cremation grounds: (ye) śmaśānāni bhejire;* literally, "These worlds, which partake of the reality of cremation grounds . . ." What these worlds share with cremation grounds is the unhappy fact that they are transitional locations through which the soul merely passes as it journeys elsewhere. These heavens lead back to another birth, in a way similar to the way the burning of the body releases the (unliberated) soul on its journey to the world of the fathers.

19.17. *like those who split open the trunk of a banana tree:* There is no explicit indication in the text that this is a metaphor, but the banana tree's lack of a hard core, a *sāra*, is a stock comparison in the *MBh*, and I think it makes more sense to take it this way than to construe it as not figurative, as in "even splitting open the trunk of the banana tree." See the notes to *MBh* 11.3.4 and 12.9.33.

19.18. *by an absolutely radical analysis: ekāntavyudāsena.* The word *vyudāsa* is otherwise unknown in the *MBh*. Nīlakaṇṭha glosses it with *tyāga*, "abandonment, rejection," and BR accepts this. The basic meaning of its root and cognates is "toss aside, scatter, disperse," which sense can narrow into "reject, abandon, exclude." I think the basic sense of dispersing or scattering a multiplicity of items must be born in mind in this context. The noun is used in the sense of "exclusion" in later scholastic literature, and I take it here to refer to a systematic process of identifying elements and excluding them if they do not meet some criterion. Stanzas 16 and 17 have just described exhaustive scriptural attempts to locate the *sāra*, the durable or permanent reality that might be accessible to human beings. Now 18 and 19 describe a different method of finding the *sāra*, an ultimately "psychoanalytic" method that brings one to the threshold of success by aptly mapping the "soul" (*ātman*) as the location of the *sāra*. In 18 the compound *ekāntavyudāsa* refers, I think, to an uncompromising (*ekānta*), introspective 'tossing aside," a progressive "exclusion," an analysis, through rational reflection or meditational exercises, or some mixture of both, of all the elements of experience to locate the *sāra*. This analysis, using "clues" or "indications" (*iṅgita-s,*), locates the *sāra*, the *ātman*, joined to desire and aversion and accompanied by past deeds. Stanza 20 then gives a general description of the successful yoga regimen that is based upon the "map" drawn in 18 and 19. It is probably more than coincidence that the *BhG* at 18.51–53, in describing a path to beatitude that is broadly similar to the one here, lists as one of its steps "having dispersed (or, excluded) desire and aversion" and uses a cognate of *vyudāsa* (*rāgadveṣau vyudasya ca;* 18.51d).

Ganguli sees this stanza as advancing a Nyāya theory of the soul and explicitly rejecting the Vedānta theory of the soul's unity, and he renders this compound with "disbelieving in its [the Soul's] unity." His interpretation is not linguistically impossible; however, I do not think that *ekānta* would be used in this sense here instead of the more expected *ekatva*. Also I think that his importing this particular metaphysical polemic into the context misconstrues the tenor of the context. Nīlakaṇṭha, taking each component in its common meaning, says the compound means "abandoning solitude," which would seem to mean rejecting the life of asceticism and renunciation; Belvalkar seems to understand it this way as well. This interpretation could be right, but it is not compelling.

19.22–25. *The men who know the ancient treatises . . . who should?* I take 22 to be Arjuna's answer to Yudhiṣṭhira's question in 21, and 23–25 as his defense of brahmins who defend the path of ritual actions and attack Upaniṣadic doctrines.

Technical Note: My assigning 22 to Arjuna has a fairly clear basis, and there is a bit of support for doing so in the tradition: the two manuscripts that contain the superb commentary of Arjunamiśra (the tradition labeled "Da" in the critical apparatus of the Pune edition) prefix "Arjuna said" before 22; no other manuscripts do that, however. But more problematic is deciding where Arjuna stops speaking (the Da manuscripts insert no other prose speech markers before the end of the chapter). Śloka 26 must be Yudhiṣṭhira speaking, as it is recommending yoga meditation once again. The terms *paṇḍitāḥ* ("learned experts") and *hetumantaḥ* ("offering arguments") in 23b and the themes of saying "It is not" and "despising" or "heaping scorn" (typically on the Vedas) in 23d and 24a are usually the hallmarks of the *MBh*'s attacks on anti-Vedic Nāstikas. But here either Yudhiṣṭhira is attacking the learned brahmins Arjuna has referred to in 22, or Arjuna is continuing to quote the learned brahmins in rebuttal of Yudhiṣṭhira's Upaniṣadic themes. Śloka 25 can be construed either way (though if Arjuna is understood to be the speaker, then 25a must be understood with an implicit "if"). I believe 23–25 are best understood as a continuation of Arjuna's defense of his anti-renunciation stance. This interpretation entails reading 23c as containing a double *sandhi* that would read *amūḍhāḥ*, "(they are) not fools," instead of *mūḍhāḥ*, "(they are) fools." Such double *sandhis* are not rare in the *MBh*.

19.23. *who hold to the ancient learning rigidly:* Perhaps the thinkers referred to here were the proto–Pūrva Mīmāṃsakas. Perhaps this tradition was intended by Yudhiṣṭhira in 19.1 when he referred to the "lower treatises," the *aparāṇi śāstrāṇi*. The early Mīmāṃsa tradition seems not to have recognized the Upaniṣads as part of the Veda. And maybe it was the Upaniṣads that Yudhiṣṭhira meant by the "higher treatises" in 19.1. Interestingly, his description of the unsuccessful searching of scriptures in 19.16–17 only went as far as the pre-Upaniṣadic Āraṇyakas. Might the "absolutely radical analysis" of 18a be Yudhiṣṭhira's general description of Upaniṣadic thought?

20.1. *an orator: vaktṛ.* The word *vaktṛ* is sometimes used pejoratively in the *MBh*, (e.g., 2.41.6 and 68.32), and the fact that "oratory" is not always welcomed by its audience may be part of the motive behind Vaiśampāyana's advance characterization of Devasthāna's speech here as "very apposite" (*abhinītataram*). In fact the following text is a rather awkwardly connected set of quotations. Devasthāna quotes the "Vaikhānasas," Bṛhaspati, and finally Manu Svayaṃbhū, as well as reciting an unattributed triṣṭubh chant in praise of King Hayagrīva's piety (20.10–14).

20.9. *Even the Law of making donations:* This śloka does not fit in with the style of the preceding ascetic verses, but it does fit their general purport. It makes an ascetic's objection to the notion, sometimes advanced by the advocates of householding, that generous giving (*dāna*) is morally similar to the ascetic's renunciation. The śloka seems to be an interpolation between this Vaikhānasa ascetic passage and the following proto-śālinī triṣṭubh passage making the priestly argument that wealth is primarily for use in sacrifices.

20.10–14. Technical Note: Five stanzas in proto-śālinī triṣṭubh meter. See Appendix 6 and compare this passage with similar proto-śālinī stanzas and passages at 11.26.5, 12.25.24–33, and 12.26.31–35, and with the metrically and thematically more complex, mixed triṣṭubh passage at 12.29.137–41 (at the end of the account of the sixteen kings).

20.10. *the fruit one desires: kāma.* As Nīlakaṇṭha says, kāma here refers to the attainment of one's desires. According to the orthodox brahmin theory of sacrifice (Pūrva Mīmāṃsa) the

ritual is an unfailing instrument that fulfills certain important human desires or needs (such as victory over one's enemies, prosperity, and heaven after death).

20.12. *The Great God:* See the notes at 12.8.36 regarding Śiva and the Sarvamedha sacrifice. In light of the fact that Devasthāna has just quoted some Vaikhānasa wisdom, it is interesting to recall that Yudhiṣṭhira was first told of the Sarvamedha rite after he entered the Vaitaraṇī River and then "went beyond the human realm," saw all the worlds, and heard Vaikhānasas reciting prayers. And the Vaikhānasas were three hundred thousand *yojanas* away! (*MBh* 3.114; again see the notes to 12.8.36 above).

20.13. *King Marutta son of Avikṣit* was famous in the *MBh* as a king who rivaled Indra. With the aid of his priest Saṃvarta (the younger brother and bitter rival of Indra's priest Bṛhaspati), he made the Gods his servants and performed a tremendous sacrifice, in which all the ritual implements were made of gold, at the base of the Himālayas. The hidden wealth of Marutta's ancient sacrifice will provide the material basis for the Aśvamedha sacrifice which Yudhiṣṭhira will perform to purify himself and the earth of the enduring miasma of the Bhārata war. Marutta's sacrifice and Yudhiṣṭhira's Aśvamedha are described in Book 14 of the *MBh*, the *Book of the Horse Sacrifice;* for the story of the former, see 14.3.20 ff. and Chapters 14.4–10. Another reason for Marutta's being mentioned here, immediately after this mention of Śiva and his performance of the Sarvamedha, is Marutta's worship of Śiva prior to undertaking his great sacrifice (*MBh* 14.8). For more on Marutta, see the second note to 12.29.16 below. For an interesting discussion of various Śaivite aspects of the story of Marutta and his priest Saṃvarta, see Scheuer, *Śiva dans le Mahābhārata*, 168–80.

20.14. *(pious) Hariścandra:* An ancient royal seer who conquered the entire earth and then offered the Royal Consecration Sacrifice. Like Marutta, Hariścandra enjoyed a unique form of success, and, again like Marutta, he was closely connected to Yudhiṣṭhira's performing one of the major royal sacrifices. See *MBh* 2.11.44 ff. and 2.49.22.

21.6. *So it is, son of Kuntī: evaṃ kaunteya.* Devasthāna's "so it is" aptly connects the catalog of ethical variety that begins here with the conflicting passages he has just quoted or recited: that is, his quotation of the Vaikhānasas praising poverty, the passage praising the expenditure of wealth in sacrificial rites, and his quotation of Bṛhaspati praising radical, yogic contentment that leads to what amounts to *mokṣa*.

21.10. *The Law . . . that does no harm: adroheṇaiva bhūtānāṃ yo dharmaḥ.* The following list of attitudes and habits is a good example of how the word *dharma* is moving away from referring simply and primarily to "Lawful Deed" and toward including the attitudes and habits of "virtue." See Appendix 4 for the word *dharma* in the *MBh* and its translation.

21.15. *may live out his time: kuryāt kālam,* a regular expression for dying.

21.16. *it is extremely difficult to get to Extinction: nirvāṇaṃ tu suduṣpāram.* Devasthāna uses the Buddhist word *nirvāṇa* here as a synonym of *mokṣa*, a usage that occurs a number of other times in the *MBh*, most notably in the *BhG* at 2.72, 5.24–26, and 6.15. The context here is not technical; thus, I think it would be unwarranted to try to read any particular technical meaning in the use of this expression. For the same reason, I think a fairly literal, etymologically straightforward rendering of the word is fine. The fact that some Buddhist philosophers could well argue that *nirvāṇa* does not really mean "extinction," or that others would refine and nuance their use of the word, does not disqualify the literal rendering "extinction." Words do not function in simple, absolute ways free of particular application and interpretation. The word *nirvāṇa* refers literally to a fire's going out, and here it refers broadly to the disappearance or extinguishing of the desirous and active self by the "perfection in *brahman*," mentioned above in the fifth stanza and elsewhere. The idea of extinction fits well with the Buddhist matrix of ideas in which it seems to have germinated; but it suits the brahminic context only partially, for the brahmin tradition always insisted people had a soul (the Self, the *ātman*) that was real and eternal, and ultimately persisted beyond the material realm, either in some kind of transcendent soul of the universe or in monadic isolation (*kaivalya*). If the idea of extinction is limited to the phenomenal parts of the person, that is, those parts of oneself that are not one's true and eternal Self (as the *MBh* typically limits it), and if the context is not one that is specially precise about the metaphysics implied, then the word works. But even in this more limited sense, the word did not become a usual brahminic expression.

22.11. *Indra was a son of Brahmā:* That is, he was the great (or great-great) grandson of Brahmā, according to the main genealogies of the *MBh* at 1.59 and 1.60. According to them, Indra is one of the offspring of Kaśyapa and Dakṣa's daughter Aditi.

23.16. *the royal seer Sudyumna:* Some northern manuscripts (including the entire tradition of Bengal), but not those of Kaśmīr, identify King Sudyumna as the son of Manu Vaivasvata. See *MBh* 13, App. 1, no. 14B, ll. 38–39 (B. 13.137.19) and *MBh* 13, App. 1, no. 16, l. 49 (B. 13.147.26cd). The latter passage seems to say that Manu's daughter Ilā "will become Sudyumna." For a bit more on this very interesting theme, see the LCP s.v. "Ilā."

24.2. The story of Śaṅkha and Likhita becomes a paradigm on the very sensitive and important topic of the punishment of brahmins. Sudyumna punishes Likhita, at the latter's insistence, and thus becomes a proverbial model of the just king. Other texts of the *MBh* advise kings not to punish brahmins. The worry expressed about finding worthy recipients for royal generosity and the repeated condemnations of unworthy brahmins echo the same general issue—brahmins sometimes engaged in behavior that others found dubious or objectionable.

24.3. *the Bāhudā River:* The indications given at *MBh* 3.85.21 and 93.1–9 suggest that the *MBh* knows the Bāhudā as a river on the southern and eastern frontiers of the Pāñcāla country. The Pāṇḍavas traveled to it by going east from the Naimiṣa forest as far as the River Gomatī, the eastern boundary of the Northern Pāñcāla kingdom, and then descending southwards (along that river?) reaching "Valakoṭī at the mountain Vṛṣaprastha," where they stayed one night and then bathed in the Bāhudā. Their next stop was at the confluence of the Gaṅgā and Yamunā at Prayāga (3.93.3–5).

24.11. *who was very strict in his behavior: saṃśitavrata.* This description of him here no doubt refers to his unquestioning obedience to his brother's stern reprimand. Likhita was innocently confident, trusting, relaxed, at ease, unthinking (*visrabdha*), when he shook the fruit down and ate it.

24.14. **Technical Note:** *I have made a promise: pratiśrauṣi,* an augmentless aorist form (in the first person middle) with anomolous strengthening of the root vowel which all manuscripts except those in Kaśmīr normalized with *pratiśrutya.* An easier, though different, sense would be had if this form were a passive aorist (the correct form would be *[a]pratiśrāvi,* and the meaning would be, "It has been promised [by you] 'I will act'"; that is, "You promised, 'I will act' [so you should do what I tell you]"), but that is too far from the reported Kaśmīrī manuscript readings to be the form those manuscripts seem to have had in mind.

24.28. *like Dakṣa Prācetasa:* What is the nature of this comparison to Dakṣa (which is repeated from 12.23.16)? Perhaps it means to say that King Sudyumna achieved a perfection that made him comparable to Dakṣa, who, though not God (Brahmā), nor the direct offspring of God, was the "demiurge" (Prajāpati) who fathered the world's creatures. On the other hand, perhaps the fusion of King Sudyumna with Ilā, the source of the lunar dynasty of kings (see the note to 12.23.16 above), makes Sudyumna comparable to Dakṣa prior to, or apart from, his feat of justice toward Likhita.

25.14. *by some extraordinary circumstance: daivena.* I ordinarily translate *daiva* with "fate," and that sense might do here as well. But the same phrase is used just below, in 25.19 ("when their king is smitten by . . . *daiva*") where "fate" would be wrong because 25.19 goes on to say that the king has some responsibility in that situation. Thus it is necessary to use a more general sense of *daiva* than usual. See the note on *daiva* at 11.1.19.

25.15. *he should not put the country up for sale: paṇyaṃ na kārayet.* This interesting reading is found only in a half dozen manuscripts (prominent among which are M_1, T_1, and G_1). Most change the text to read "he should make the country virtuous" (*puṇyaṃ ca* instead of *paṇyaṃ na*).

25.23. *who fought bravely all by himself:* I reproduce the run-on structure of the Sanskrit, changing adjective and gerund phrases into relative clauses, because breaking these phrases out into separate sentences ultimately diminishes them.

25.24–33. **Technical Note:** *The work the king does . . . :* The beginning of a proto-śālinī triṣṭubh passage that has thematic links to two of the other such passages in this episode. See the note to 12.20.10–14.

25.28. *gave himself up completely: saṃtyaktātmā.* This is the proper attitude of warriors entering battle; they have abandoned all hope of surviving.

26.5–12. *One does not get anything through his deeds: na karmaṇā . . . labhyate. . . .* An almost classically regular upajāti triṣṭubh passage (four of the thirty-two verses making up these eight stanzas have irregular "breaks"). These verses put a rather extreme doctrine of fatalism into Vyāsa's mouth. Vyāsa directly contradicts this doctrine below in Chapter 12.32.

26.6. *philosophy: buddhiśāstra.* I do not think it is misleading to translate this compound as "philosophy." The term occurs only one other time in the *MBh,* at 12.343.8. See the note on the term *buddhi* at 11.1.36–37.

26.13. *a song sung by King Senajit:* The same ideas that are presented here arc connected to King Senajit's name at another location in the *MBh,* 12.168. (Apart from these two passages he is unknown in the *MBh.* The name may occur at 5.139.27 [so van Buitenen, 3: 446, who has the typo Senājit], but it is probably just an adjective describing King Kuntibhoja the younger, the maternal uncle of the three older Pāṇḍavas, as "conqueror of [enemy] armies"). The very first subtext of the *The Laws for Gaining Absolute Freedom* (12.168) portrays King Senajit overwhelmed with grief at the death of his son. An unnamed brahmin preaches a sermon to him intended to dissuade him of his grief. Many of the statements attributed to King Senajit here also occur in the body of that sermon. At 12.168 it is the brahmin who recites the verses extolling the wisdom of detaching oneself from the impersonal cycles of the world's processes, but here, less appropriately, the words are put in King Senajit's mouth. We might imagine that he is repeating the brahmin's sermon, but the vocative expressions "O king" in 15 complicate that notion, even if we take (as I do) 15ab, "But men kill other men, . . ." as an objection to the general assertion made in 14.

26.14. *This inevitable turning: eṣa paryāyaḥ . . . dustaraḥ.*

26.15–16. *But men kill other men . . . :* An objection which argues that human will and human action are important as well. Verse 15cd rebuts the claim. Though it is less obvious, I take 16ab ("Some think, 'He kills,' while others think, 'No one kills.'") to be a further demurral by the objector, and 16cd ("The coming into being and passing away of beings . . .") as the main speaker's final pronouncement on the matter.

26.17. *one can arrive at an end of the grief by thinking, "Ah, this is a hardship."* The idea here seems to be that when a person takes cognizance of misery as "misery," that labeling ends the grief or at least constitutes the psychological foundation of ending the grief. This idea is similar to the idea of śloka 26, "one should regard what has come to him simply as 'what has come to me,'" and both such statements resemble a similar remedy proposed in the Stoic writer Epictetus.

26.27. *Just do something a little bit disagreeable to your wife or your sons, and then you will know who, whose, why, and how you are.* I do not understand the exact purport of this statement. I have construed it as a somewhat taunting dissent from the preceding statement. Śloka 26 recommended a splendid detachment from the world around one; 27 suggests that such existential neutrality is actually quite difficult to achieve; see also 347.9.

26.30. *A person who is happy at the misery of another:* This statement seems to be an interpolated afterthought.

26.31. **Technical Note:** *Happiness and misery, being and non-being:* This stanza summarizes one of the themes of King Senajit's speech, but it switches the meter from the anuṣṭubh śloka to the triṣṭubh. Stanzas 32–35 are almost perfectly classical śālinī triṣṭubhs, but the current stanza is a mixed triṣṭubh in which upajāti and śālinī-type triṣṭubhs alternate (specifically: upendravajra, vātormī, indravajra, and śālinī). It seems that stanza 31 is a "bridge stanza" written by the redactor who knit these triṣṭubhs (which have significant metric and thematic connections to the Hayagrīva section in the last chapter, 12.25.24–33) together with the preceding material.

26.32–35. **Technical Note:** *They say . . . :* Four almost perfect, classical śālinī triṣṭubh stanzas. The only deviation from the standard is that 34a is hypermetric. Several important manuscripts attempted to eliminate the extra syllable, but the metrically irregular reading is much better attested.

26.32. *purificatory rites: pāvanāni.* The statement here is somewhat puzzling and raises

interesting issues. What "purifications" might a king require for performing his socially sanctioned acts of violence? A quick search in *HDhŚ* does not reveal any purifications specific to the king's performing his kingly role. I take the mention of such rites here to refer to the *Mahābhārata's* idea that the Aśvamedha sacrifice can be offered as "expiation" (*prāyaścitta*), an idea that seems to arise because of the accusations against righteous warfare that Yudhiṣṭhira makes here.

27.10. *imperial ruler: cakravartī rājā.* The figure referred to here, evidently named Ugrāyudha, is otherwise unknown.

27.11. *The keeper of his own death: svayaṃ mṛtyuṃ rakṣamāṇaḥ.* A reference to Bhīṣma's privilege of choosing the time of his death. See the LCP and the note to 11.23.20

27.14–17. *I lied to him about his son:* Droṇa's son was named Aśvatthāman. The Pāṇḍavas believed that Droṇa would withdraw from the war if his son were slain. So, at Kṛṣṇa's insistence, Bhīma had earlier tried to deceive Droṇa by telling him, "Aśvatthāman has been killed," though only an elephant of that name had been killed. Droṇa did not believe Bhīma and eventually approached Yudhiṣṭhira to inquire into the truth of the report. Droṇa trusted that his principled pupil, the eldest Pāṇḍava, Yudhiṣṭhira, would never utter a lie. But Yudhiṣṭhira confirmed to him that Aśvatthāman had been killed, saying the word "elephant" under his breath after the name Aśvatthāman. See *MBh* 7.164.66–77 and 94–110.

27.17. *I put a little jacket on the truth: satyakañcukam āsthāya:* Literally, "resorting to," or, "making use of," "a truth-*kañcuka*." A *kañcuka* is a small, tight-fitting garment worn on the upper body (sometimes made of some material that makes it into a protective piece of clothing, a cuirass). Sometimes the word means "disguise," and that translation may seem more apposite. But I think the point here is that a *kañcuka* (a jacket or doublet) covers half the body and leaves the other half exposed, and Yudhiṣṭhira spoke half the truth openly while concealing the other half. At the same time, many manuscripts read, instead of *āsthāya*, a word (either *utsṛjya* or *unmucya*) that means having cast off the truth-*kañcuka*, which would translate with something like "casting aside the garb (or armor) of the truth, I said . . ."

27.19. *like a lion just born in the mountains! jātaṃ siṃham ivādriṣu.* I take the participle *jātam* as an abbreviated expression for *jātameva* or *jātamātram* because there is a consistent thematic emphasis upon Abhimanyu's tender age when the *MBh* speaks of him. For example, when he begins his assault upon Droṇa's army on the thirteenth day, he is like "a lion-cub falling upon elephants" (*MBh* 7.35.12). The lion-motif occurs frequently in connection with Abhimanyu.

27.21. *[Draupadī] has lost five sons:* Draupadī gave birth to one son from each of her five husbands. They were all killed in the infamous raid of Aśvatthāman (Droṇa's son) upon the Pāṇḍava camp on the night after the eighteenth and final day of the war. See *MBh* 10.8.

27.32d. *You are not your own master all by yourself: neśas tvam ātmanā nṛpa.* This interesting, even tantalizing, pāda is too terse to be clear. I have interpreted it in line with the general argument by assuming an implicit "of yourself" (*ātmanaḥ*) as the complement of *īśa*, giving "your own master."

28.10. **Technical Note:** *they will never live past that to a hundred years: pareṇa te varṣaśatān na bhaviṣyanti.* Normally one would construe *pareṇa* in conjunction with a word in the ablative case (here *varṣaśatān*, "a hundred years") as "(not) beyond a hundred years." But since that undermines the rhetorical point of the sentence, I take the *pareṇa* as referring implicitly to the periods of time already mentioned in pāda b and construe the ablative as "the point up to which." A hundred years is the length of life hoped for, and the stanza must be saying these men will not reach it, not that they will not live past it.

28.13 (1). *All the various miseries:* I take this stanza as an objection to the last stanza's denying a third cause of mental miseries. But it is not clear exactly how "those (things causing misery) that impinge (upon one from without)" (*sāṃsparśakāni* in 13d) should be understood to be ultimately different from "the sudden onset of something unwelcome" (*aniṣṭopanipāta*).

28.13 (2). *those that impinge from without: sāṃsparśakāni,* literally "those that derive from contact between the senses and extra-corporeal objects." See the parallel form of this śloka at 12.170.20, which reads instead *gātrasaṃsparśajāni*, which I have tentatively rendered with "things impinging upon the limbs." Belvalkar's reading *-kāni* here instead of the more frequently attested *-jāni* is good and sound.

28.28. *while those born in rich families pass on like bugs: samṛddhe ca kule jātā vinaśyanti pataṃgavat.*

28.32. **Technical Note:** *all sorts of things, desirable and undesirable alike, beset every creature: sarvārthānīpsitānīpsitāni ca / spṛśanti sarvabhūtāni.* Given the testimony of four good Kaśmīrī manuscripts, Belvalkar's reading must be the correct one. But either the text here contains a solecism (*sarvārthān īpsitānīpsitāni*), or we must read artha unusually as a neuter (*arthāni* and read a vowel *saṃdhi* across a pāda boundary. The confusion is irresolvable; the stanza can be construed satisfactorily either way, with essentially the same meaning.

28.40. *rebirth, which goes round like a wheel: saṃsāre cakravadgatau.* The word *saṃsāra* seems to refer collectively here to rebirths in general, whereas the plural *saṃsāreṣu* ("in their rebirths") was used just above in 12.28.38. See the notes at *MBh* 11.3.16, 4.6, and 6.5.

28.41. *one who wants to go there must stay within what is taught by tradition and trustingly surrender himself: āgamāṃs tv anatikramya śraddhātavyaṃ bubhūṣatā.* Hans-Werbin Köhler has detailed the interesting and important developmental history of the word *śraddhā*, showing that "religious zeal (*religiöser Eifer*), letting go or surrender (especially of oneself) (*Hingabe*), and munificence (especially toward priests) (*Spendefreudigkeit*)" become dominant senses of the word in the late Vedic period (see Köhler, *Śrad-dhā*, 64–65). Still, these important subjective states are sometimes connected to cognitive uncertainties regarding things unseen, as here (and as demonstrated in some of the passages Köhler analyzes; e.g., see 51–54), and there is often still need for the English word "faith," which combines both affective and cognitive elements, in translations. See the note above to 12.10.19.

28.42. *Lawful Duties: dharmāṇi,* neuter plural. The neuter form of this word is unusual in the *MBh*.

28.55. *should have divided himself into two and thus pay honor both to heaven and this world:* (I am not fully confident of the "should have divided himself into two" for *pravibhaktapakṣaḥ*, but I can think of no better interpretation. My interpretation of the compound is essentially the same as Belvalkar's suggestion in his critical notes, *ad loc.*, though I take this bifurcation of one's efforts more broadly than he does. Belvalkar sees the division as referring to one's pursuing the householder *āśrama* after completing one's period as a student.) That is, in terms of "the Group of Three Motives"—doing dharma on the one hand and acting according to artha and kāma on the other. See *MBh* 9.59.17–18, where Balarāma responds to an argument which exalts expediency (artha) that was made by Kṛṣṇa in defense of Bhīma's low blow in his club-duel with Duryodhana. Kṛṣṇa's "white" brother says, "A Lawful Deed that is well performed by virtuous people is restricted by the other two (kinds of human motive, namely artha, Success [and Profit, or Gain, and Riches], and kāma, Pleasure). So too the pursuit of Success by someone consumed with greed for Success, and the pursuit of Pleasure by someone deeply attached to Pleasure. The one who enjoys happiness beyond measure is he who attains Merit (dharma, the consequence of performing one's Law, dharma), Success, or Pleasure without violating Success and Pleasure in the first case, Law (dharma) and Pleasure in the second case, or Law and Riches in the third."

29.12. *Sṛñjaya:* The story of king Sṛñjaya and his son Svarṇaṣṭhīvin (who dies while still a boy) is told in the following two chapters. Another version of this entire episode, including the following account of the sixteen kings, may be found in *MBh* 7, App. 1, no. 8, of S. K. De's critical edition of the *The Book of Droṇa* of the *Mahābhārata*.

29.13. **Technical Note:** *[we] must live without being free from pleasures and pains: sukhaduḥkhair . . . avimuktaṃ cariṣyāmaḥ.* The future is used with modal effect. Professor Belvalkar has threaded his way admirably through several difficulties in arriving at this reading, but perhaps the reading of the Śāradā and K_1 manuscripts—*savimuktam* ("freed from pleasures and pains"; that is, fundamentally detached from the pleasures and pains we experience) instead of *avimuktam*—should have been preferred on both textual and thematic grounds. On the other hand, Belvalkar evidently reasoned that the reading *savimuktam* was an "easier reading" (*lectio facilior*), and thus a later one, than *avimuktam*, and one can argue that point as easily as its opposite. I mention this small question because it sharply highlights a certain kind of essentially irresolvable problem at the heart of the Pune editorial process. Those who study the textual apparatus to 12.29.13 will see other significant textual problems Belvalkar resolved here as well.

29.14. *the splendid good fortune of kings: mahābhāgyaṃ paraṃ rājñām.*

29.16 (1). Technical Note: *Sṛñjaya, hear about Marutta:* On the basis of several important manuscripts from Kaśmīr, Belvalkar has chosen to read as the verb here the archaic seeming (i.e., Vedic; and even there unusual [see Macdonell *Vedic Grammar,* #486]) imperative form of a perfect stem, *śuśruhi.* Most other manuscripts read the more usual *śuśruma,* "we have heard."

29.16 (2). King Marutta, son of Avikṣit, was famous in the *MBh* as a rival of Indra and the performer of a great sacrifice at the foot of the Himālayas. See the note to 12.20.13 above. Marutta was also famous as the subject of a śloka quoted in the *Śatapatha* and *Aitareya Brāhmaṇas* (at 13.5.4.6 in the former and 8.21 in the latter; the second verses of the stanzas are slightly different, though the general purport is the same). Here is the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* version: *marútaḥ pariveṣṭā́ro marúttasyāvasan gṛhe / āvikṣitásyāgníḥ kṣattā víśve deváḥ sabhāsádaḥ:* "The winds (Maruts) dwelled in Marutta's house as his footmen, Agni was the chamberlain of Avikṣit's son, and the All Gods were his courtiers.") This śloka is alluded to and partially quoted below in 12.29.19.

29.16 (3). *when this exalted king made an "Offering of All Things": viśvasṛjaḥ rājñaḥ mahātmanaḥ;* literally, "when he poured out everything as an offering." The term *viśvasṛj* usually refers to a divine being who "'creates' everything," and there would seem to be an interesting inversion of creation implied here in the king's offering everything into the fire. This "Offering of All Things" here seems likely to be the same as the Sacrifice of All Things (Sarvamedha) mentioned above at 12.8.36, 12.12.26, 12.20.12, and 12.25.7 and discussed in notes to 12.8.34, 36 and 12.20.12. Ganguli goes so far as to see *viśvasṛj* here as the name of a sacrifice "in which the performer parts with *all* of his wealth." I do not know what his warrant is for taking the compound as a name.

29.20. *the presents to the priests surpassed Gods, men, and Gandharvas: devān . . . atyaricyanta dakṣiṇāḥ.* The sense is that his presents to the priests surpassed the riches possessed by Gods, men, and Gandharvas.

29.21. Technical Note: *you should not grieve for your son: mā putram anutapyathāḥ.* A relatively rare occurrence of the prohibitive particle *mā* with the imperfect (rather than the aorist); perhaps an indication of relatively older age, as this construction, uncommon in the *Ṛg Veda,* becomes increasingly more unusual with the passage of time (see Whitney, *Sanskrit Grammar,* 579a). Or, if considered with the Vedic throwback *śuśruhi* in 16b, perhaps it is deliberately contrived archaism.

29.22. Technical Note: *son of Vitithi: vaitithi.* Possibly "son of Vititha," perhaps a confused or corrupted form of Vitatha. See *MBh* 1.89.17–20 and Sukthankar's references there to Pargiter, *Ancient Indian Historical Tradition* (162). Many northern manuscripts read the name as Atithi, a name which is otherwise unknown in the *MBh* and earlier literature. The reading of 22a must be studied in conjunction with 25d and its apparatus. Also, the word *ced* in 22a seems out of place, but is well attested, suggesting further that the tradition here is garbled.

29.24. *dolphins: śiṃśuka.* The word *śiṃśuka* is otherwise unattested and must be an allomorph of the more usual *śiṃśumāra / śiśumāra,* the "Gangetic Dolphin" *Platanista gangetica* (Lebeck), according to S. H. Prater, *The Indian Book of Animals* (312–14; I owe this identification to a posting by Dr. Dominik Wujastyk on the Usenet Newsgroup "Indology" [http:/www.ucl.ac.uk/~ucgadkw/indology.html], December 16, 1996). BR, followed by MW, named this animal *Delphinus gangeticus,* but the *Platanista* are distinct from the true dolphins by virtue of a "very short neck" (Prater, *Indian Book of Animals,* 314). Nīlakaṇṭha is silent on *śiṃśuka* here, and of *śiśumāra* at *MBh* 1.176.15 he says simply "*jalajantu,*" (water-creature). Excellent color illustrations of this mammal and its very similar Indus cousin (*Platanista minor,* now again considered to be a separate species) are found in Mark Carwardine's *Whales, Dolphins, and Porpoises,* 230–33, a reference I owe to Dominik Wujastyk.

29.26 (1). *the entire amount of gold—which had been melted down into its basic form: tad hiraṇyam aparyantam āvṛttam.* The first verse of this stanza is hopelessly unclear; the problems are (1) what does *aparyantam* ("unlimited, endless") modify, either adjectivally or adverbially? and (2) what does *āvṛtta* (literally, "turned back") mean here? As can be seen in the translation, I have taken *aparyantam* as an adjective modifying *tad hiraṇyam,* and I have taken *āvṛtta* as saying that the gold had "reverted" to its elemental form.

29.26 (2). *in Kuru's Country: kurujāṅgale.* A *jāṅgala* is, according to a verse found in

commentaries to Manu 7.69, an area "which has little water and grass, where strong breezes prevail, the heat is great, where grain and the like are abundant" (trans. Georg Bühler); just the opposite of the current sense of English "jungle," as Smith and Doniger note in their translation of Manu 7.69. The term occurs in the *MBh* almost exclusively in connection with the name of King Kuru, descendant of Bharata and ancestor of the Pāṇḍavas (e.g., see *MBh* 1.89.43). The opposition between Kuru's Field and Kuru's Jungle is interesting. But both Manu 7.69 and the verse characterizing a *jāṅgala* area quoted by commentators upon it mention an abundance of grain, thus precluding our understanding the opposition as simply one between tilled and untilled land.

29.27. *Śvaitya:* Unclear; evidently an epithet or patronymic of Sṛñjaya. Perhaps his father's name was Śvitya, as Nīlakaṇṭha says (at *MBh* 7, App. 1, no. 8, l.359 [B. 7.55.50]), or perhaps Śvaitya is ultimately a transformation of another of Sṛñjaya's names, Śaibya. Further complicating the question is the fact that it seems Sṛñjaya is referred to by the name Śveta at 12.149.63. This fact is relevant because one easy understanding of Śvaitya is "son of Śveta."

29.31. *Indra was drunk with the Soma: amādyad indraḥ somena.* Of course "drunk" typically refers to alcoholic intoxication, and Soma was not an alcoholic beverage (see the glossary, s.v. "Soma"). But in the absence of a more suitable term I use "drunk" here in a wide sense. "Drunk" appropriately implies boisterousness and suggests violence in a way the more vague "high" does not; "drunk" also has a history of being used metaphorically, which is immediately useful here.

29.33. *the seven basic forms of the Soma ritual:* These are Agniṣṭoma, Atyagniṣṭoma, Ukthya, Ṣoḍaśin, Vājapeya, Atirātra, and Āptoryāma, according to Nīlakaṇṭha. See Louis Renou, *Vocabulaire du rituel Védique,* s.v. "*saṃsthā.*"

29.40. Bharata was the descendant of Yayāti and Pūru, and the main eponymous ancestor of both the Kauravas and the Pāṇḍavas. See the entry on Bharata in the LCP.

29.44. The forest seer Kaṇva was the guardian of Bharata's mother Śakuntalā before she became Duḥṣānta's queen; see *MBh* 1.64.

29.53. *Suffering grievously: mahātapāḥ.* The word *tapas* signifies "heat, pain, or suffering" generally. Deliberately self-inflicted pain, that is "asceticism" is only one species of *tapas.*

29.54. *a dark youth with red eyes:* This description is interestingly similar to descriptions of Skanda and Murugan.

29.56. *Indra drank Soma and became very drunk: somaṃ pītvā madotkaṭaḥ.* See the note to 29.31 above.

29.61 *when he was living up in the hills: upahvare nivasataḥ.* Nīlakaṇṭha interprets *upahvare* as simply "nearby" (to the Gaṅgā River), which is plausible. But I prefer to see the word as a reference to Bhagīratha's thousand years spent in the Himālayas placating the river (see *MBh* 3.107.3–14). Of course his being in the mountains did bring him near the Gaṅgā in the sky.

and thus became "Urvaśī": Urvaśī was an Apsaras nymph known as far back in Sanskrit literature as the famous dialogue-hymn *Ṛg Veda* 10.95. I am not aware of any other explicit connection between this celestial nymph and the Gaṅgā River, though there are several interesting parallels and inversions between the story of Gaṅgā's conditional marriage to Śaṃtanu (told at *MBh* 1.91–94) [which marriage is preceded by her leaving her heavenly companions and seating herself upon the thigh of the Bhārata king Pratīpa, Śaṃtanu's father] and the story of Urvaśī's conditional marriage to the ancient Bhārata dynast Purūravas [as told at *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* 11.5.1.1 ff. and in other texts]). As the word *urvaśī* can be understood as an adjective meaning "going, reaching, stretching far or widely," it is not at all implausible to see it applied to the Gaṅgā. Nīlakaṇṭha interprets the word *urvaśī* slightly more loosely than my explanation in the footnote. He sees the root √*vas,* "dwell, stay," in the name, taking it as "staying, or resting, upon (his) thigh" (*ūrau vāso yasyāḥ sā*).

29.61–62. *Gaṅgā . . . approached Bhagīratha:* These two ślokas refer to Bhagīratha's summoning the Gaṅgā River down from heaven (see the LCP, s.v. "Bhāgīrathī"). The account of this meeting is related at *MBh* 3.107.14 ff.

29.62. *Gaṅgā, who travels a course through all three worlds:* In the *MBh* the course of the Gaṅgā River is believed to run first through the sky, then to descend to the surface of the earth, and finally, to move down below the earth's surface. Originally it flowed down through the sky

from the peak of Mt. Meru, crashing into, and being held for one hundred thousand years, by the matted locks of hair on the head of Lord Śiva (sitting in meditation on the northern slope of Meru), before descending to the earth. See *MBh* 1.158.17 ff., 3.107–8.6 ff., and 6.26–8.

29.64. *Dilīpa:* The father of Bhagīratha according to *MBh* 3.106, who tried but failed to bring the Gaṅgā down to the earth. The patronymic Ailavila is obscure (no Ilavila is known in the *MBh* or earlier literature), though, interestingly, Kubera is also known as Ailavila in the *MBh*.

29.68–69. *would play the seven notes of the lute: saptadhā //68 // avādayat vīṇām.* Nīlakaṇṭha suggests this reading across the metric boundary because it is the only way to construe *saptadhā*, "sevenfold"; seven is the usual number of the musical notes.

29.72. *the words "I give to you": dīyatām iti,* which is literally, "Let it be given," referring to the king's making gifts to worthy recipients

29.75. The *offering mixture* had been concocted to remedy Yuvanāśva's childlessness and it was intended to be consumed by his queen. The baby was born after a hundred years of gestation. The story of Māndhātar is related in the *MBh* at 3.126.

29.76. We have here an etymological explanation of the name Māndhātar, as we had above at 29.61 with Urvaśī. The name Māndhātar comes from the phrase in this way: ***Mām eva dhāsyati*** followed by a suffix of agency ***-tṛ/-tar***, which may also indicate futurity. By the laws of Sanskrit phonetics, the final *m* of the *mām* will become *n* before a following *d*, and *dhā* is the root—that is, the distinctive *semantic* element—of the word *dhāsyati:* Hence Mān-dhā-tar, "He who will suckle me."

29.84. *Rohita fish:* "Red Fish," said by BR and MW to be *Cyprinus rohita.* After Manu 5.15 condemns all consumption of fish for brahmins, 5.16 qualifies that by allowing the eating of five particular kinds of fish. The Rohita is one of two kinds that may be eaten if it is offered in a rite to the Gods or the ancestors.

29.85. Whether a *yojana* was two and half miles or nine miles in length, these presents were on the same scale as Bhagīratha's, described above in ślokas 58–60.

29.87. See *MBh* 1.70–80 and 81–88 for two extended accounts of King Yayāti, and see the LCP for general information on him and his famous and important father Nahuṣa.

29.96. *[They] went upon the southern course: dakṣiṇāyanam.* That is, they traveled the way of the ancestors upon their deaths. See the note above to *MBh* 12.19.13–14.

29.105 (1). *my Splendid Richness shall be inexhaustible:* The text reads only, "Let (it) [feminine singular] be inexhaustible as I give" *(dadato me 'kṣayā cāstu).* Given the context, I believe Śrī is what the text assumed. Several manuscripts rearranged the text to make the material aspect of this idea explicit, reading *me 'kṣayaṃ vittam.*

29.105 (2). *enthusiastic munificence: śraddhā;* see the notes above to 12.10.19 and 28.41.

29.107. *the Seasonal Sacrifices: cāturmāsyaiḥ,* literally, the sacrifice "every fourth month"; the three sacrifices every year connected with the three main seasons of the year.

29.115. *animals of the village, and forest animals too, approached him of their own accord for his sacrifices:* "desiring to go to heaven," explains the parallel passage in the apparatus to Book 7 of the *Mahābhārata* (*MBh* 7, App. 1, no. 8, l. 698 [B. 7.67.4]).

29.118. *At the wise Rantideva's New Moon and Full Moon Sacrifices every month: anvāhārya.* The Darśa (New Moon) and Pūrṇamāsa (Full Moon) sacrifices were done alternately every fifteen lunar days on the days of new moon and full moon. The *anvāhārya* is a special offering made with rice given as a present (or stipend, *dakṣiṇā*) to the priest at these rites.

29.119. Technical Note: *Any night one stayed:* Belvalkar's reading of *avasat* here is unexpected on the face of things, but in fact Belvalkar has shown his deft touch once again. The reading of the singular verb *avasat* ("one stayed") is supported by the relatively weak conjunction of mss. $K_{3,5}$ and M_3, while there is otherwise almost complete agreement between the Kaśmīrī tradition (and most of the rest of the Northern tradition as well) and almost the entire Southern tradition on the plural *avasan* ("they stayed"). The context makes the rival plural verb *avasan* seem natural here, makes this verb seem an extension of the description of Rantideva's lavish New and Full Moon sacrifices. But, as the words attributed to the cooks in 120cd suggest, the point here concerns the king's hospitality toward guests, toward guests arriving haphazardly. If the point were a continuation of the description of Rantideva's opulent New and Full Moon

Sacrifices—that is, if the hospitality being praised were planned hospitality—the force of the whole vignette would be significantly diminished. The parallel passage (at B. 7.67.16) gives this sense exactly and explicitly, reading *yāṃ rātrim atithir vaset* ("the night a guest might stay"). The critical edition of Pune (*MBh* 7, App. 1, no. 8, l.719) reads the impossible *atithim* instead of *atithir*, but I infer that to be a typographical error, because the apparatus for this line fails to mention *atithir* as a variant reading.

29.122. See *MBh* 3.104–7 for the story of King Sagara and his descendants.

29.127. *the ocean:* In the account in the *Mahābhārata's Book of the Forest*, the ocean had already existed before Sagara's time. In 3.103 the seer Agastya, sometime before Sagara, is said to have swallowed all its water and thus rendered the earth's ocean dry. In 3.105 the sixty thousand sons of Sagara dug in the dry ocean bed. As described above in this chapter (and at 3.107), Sagara's great-great-grandson Bhagīratha called the Gaṅgā down from the sky, and her waters flowed into the dry ocean bed.

29.134ab (1). *He fixed in place the waters of the ocean: āpaḥ saṃstambhire yasya samudrasya yiyāsataḥ.* Belvalkar chose correctly in reading *saṃstambhire*, a solecism found in the Śāradā ms. and in $K_{1,4}$ and D_1. Most manuscripts read the correct perfect *tastaṃbhire*, and I take this to be the form the author had in mind, however the *saṃstambhire* came to be written down. I construe it as a passive with an implicit *pṛthunā*.

The text says it was the ocean that desired to advance, and its waters were stopped or fixed. I assume the text means to attribute this fixing of a boundary of the ocean to Pṛthu—thus my taking the verb as a passive with Pṛthu as the agent. For the sake of the English, I have also removed the desiderative participle ("desiring, or inclined to go or advance," "on the verge of going or advancing") from the word "ocean" and joined it to "the waters." Ganguli interprets this participle as modifying an implicit *pṛthoḥ* (genitive of Pṛthu, serving to indicate him as the beneficiary of the process described): "When Prithu desired to go over the sea, the waters became solidified." This interpretation is not far-fetched: the verb-root √*stambh* is used more than once in the *MBh* to represent miraculous rigidification of water. (For example, when Duryodhana flees the battlefield and stiffens the waters of a lake to hide in it without sinking to the bottom (at *MBh* 9.28.52); and at 12.315.46 it is used in connection with the waters of the celestial Gaṅgā.) But I think the whole śloka works better if we see the first verse as describing Pṛthu's stopping the advancing waters of the ocean to create an ocean shore and the second as complementarily describing his splitting up the waters that were already over land, thus separating out "rivers."

29.134c (2). *he broke the rivers apart: saritaś cānudīryanta.* Again I assume an implicit *pṛthunā*. As indicated in the last note, I see this pāda as describing Pṛthu's separating the waters of the continent with dry land. Perhaps there was thought to be some kind of cause and effect connection between the stopping of the ocean (i.e., effectively damming it up) and the waters behind the dam drying up into separate streams, creating separate rivers and tributaries. The alternative form of this episode that was inserted into the *The Book of Droṇa* (see *MBh* 7, App. 1, no. 8, ll. 779–80) does not have this reference to rivers. It reads instead "mountains made way for him" (*parvatāś ca dadur mārgam*).

29.134 (3). *his flag never failed to fly: dhvajasaṅgaś ca nābhavat.* The somewhat inscrutable Sanskrit expression has caused some consternation in the past. My interpretation is merely conjectural. The word *saṅga* refers to something "sticking" to something else. If a king's banner inauspiciously "sticks," that would seem to refer primarily to its failure, because of wetness, tangles, a lack of wind, and so on, to unfurl and stand stiffly out from its supporting pole or rod; a sign that obviously bodes ill for the king.

29.141. *Svarṇaṣṭhīvin:* I base my gloss of his name (the generalized "excretor of gold") on *MBh* 7, App. 1, no. 8, l.307 (B. 7.55.23cd), which enumerates his father's wish that his future son's urine, feces, sweat, and "moisture" (*kleda*, unclear; might it refer to his saliva [which is what the word *ṣṭhīvin* primarily refers to], or his tears?) be made of gold.

30.6. Technical Note: *happily giving up:* I construe the compound *vihartukāmau* in 5c in conjunction with the complementary instrumentals in 6ab, the sense being "desiring to be separate from, desirous of dispensing with."

30.32. *she went to no one else about her husband—not to any God . . . not even in her thoughts: na cānyaṃ manasāpy agāt . . . patitve.* What is meant is that she did not seek the help of any

supernatural or preternatural beings "concerning his being her husband," that is, she sought no miraculous relief from Parvata's curse upon her husband.

30.36. *to get even: matsarāt;* more literally, "out of spite," or "from an angry desire for revenge."

30.41. *when she learned of the problem of her husband's curse: śāpadoṣaṃ ca taṃ bhartuḥ śrutvā.* We might wonder why Sukumārī should only now get an explanation of the curse upon her husband. Did she not require some explanation of the change in Nārada's appearance upon their marrying? But Sukumārī's confusion and distress are not what interests the text in this story. Her silent acquiescence to Nārada's changed form at the start of their marriage demonstrates proper compliance and subservience in the face of adversity. And her flight now from a splendid and handsome Nārada demonstrates her virtue again. She flees because she is worried about committing adultery, and she is offered an explanation of what has happened not because she is alarmed, frightened, or confused, but because of her concern for dharma.

31.21. *in that form: ahaṃ te dayitaṃ putram . . . / punar dāsyāmi tadrūpam.* Nārada promises to restore the boy with his remarkable body.

31.22. *when it suited him: yathākāmam.* This expression contrasts with *yathāvidhi* (in accordance with prescription) and similar expressions that specify that someone's actions are regulated by prescription, obligation, Law (dharma).

31.30. *in the company of his harem: sāntaḥpuro rājā.* See my note on the word "harem" at *MBh* 11.18.16.

31.32. *The boy . . . ran right into that tiger: bālaḥ . . . / sahasotpatitaṃ vyāghram āsasāda. . . .* The verb *āsasāda* ("met, encountered, ran into") used here could also mean "(he) attacked (it)," and that sense would seem to correlate well with the śloka's emphasis upon the boy's preternatural prowess. But the participle *vepamānaḥ* ("trembling, convulsing"), used in the next śloka to describe the boy as the tiger mauled him, does not buttress the interpretation that the boy attacked the tiger. The verb-root √*vip* generally describes involuntary physical responses of shaking and trembling and so forth in the face of a powerful stimulant such as a ferocious beast, a sage threatening to pronounce a curse, or a handsome member of the opposite sex.

31.45. *the one who operates through Time:* Death, *kāladharma.* This verse is identical to *MBh* 1.70.46cd. In disagreement with BR, van Buitenen, and others, I take *kāladharma* here as a shorter, a later, form of *kāladharman,* which actually occurs more frequently in the *MBh.* This latter compound means "the one that has Time as a particular characteristic." This meaning of the word *dharma* is far less frequent in the *MBh* than the complex of meanings referring to meritorious behavior or law, and it represents a separate branch of semantic development from Vedic *dhárman.* But in its shortened form its understanding could easily be influenced by the more usual sense of epic dharma, and be understood plausibly in such ways as the "decree of Time," or, as van Buitenen has it at 1.70.46, the "Law of Time"; similarly, Goldman at *Rām.* 1.41.1.

32.11. *the doer of deeds may be the Lord:* The basic categories in the review of action given here, as elsewhere in the *MBh,* distinguish humans' controlling events (the efficacy of *pauruṣa karman,* "human action,") and their not controlling them. This second category, where events are not controlled by people, is then generally divided between events happening with some kind of design or intention ("nature," [*svabhāva,* at the universal level], "fate" [*daiva, diṣṭa, vidhāna, niyati*], the consequences of previously done action, or what is effected by the Lord, the Designer, or Arranger [Vidhātṛ], and "the Creator" [Dhātṛ]) and those that just happen, absurdly, without any design ("chance" [*haṭha, yadṛcchā*], and "Time" [*kāla*]). Key passages in the *MBh* that treat this issue are found in an argument against Yudhiṣṭhira's general conduct that Draupadī pursues vigorously soon after the Pāṇḍavas begin their exile in the forest. See in particular *MBh* 3.31.1–42 and 3.33.1–55, especially, verses 20 ff. of the former, where Draupadī paints a frightening picture of God's control of human behavior, and verses10 ff. and 30 ff. of the latter.

But though this passage uses some of the themes and categories of the discussion in the third book of the *MBh* (which was focused upon the issue of the meaningfulness of human action), it is focused on a different issue. In the passage here Vyāsa tries to alleviate Yudhiṣṭhira's sense of personal responsibility by presenting five different ways to view the

issue of responsibility for what one does (the violence wrought by kings, in particular) and then stating that a human being, the king in particular, is not culpable for the violence he wreaks.

32.12–13. *commanded by the Lord: īśvareṇa niyuktāḥ.* The first understanding of action Vyāsa mentions, the Lord's performing actions by using people, resembles closely Draupadī's sarcastic diatribe in 3.31.20–42, which ends with her bitter statement that of course the Lord is mighty enough to evade suffering the consequences of his violent deeds. The word *īśvara* here might be interpreted merely to signify a person's "master," or "boss." The logic of Vyāsa's points would still hold, but that restricted sense of the word does not seem commensurate with the way the *MBh* sets up this theme here and elsewhere.

32.14ab *by taking them over from him: tadupādānāt.* I take this verse as an objection to the thesis advanced by Vyāsa in 12 and 13. The objection has the same subject as verse 12 above (*puruṣāḥ,* "men"), qualified in the same way as stipulated there (*īśvareṇa niyuktāḥ,* "commanded by the Lord"). Thus the objector describes here an understanding in which people take responsibility from God for actions he has determined by "taking them over from him," that is, presumably by their own desiring the fruits of those actions and by their own forming of an intention to perform them.

32.16. *So then, do another good deed: tasmād evam anyac chubaṃ kuru.* Vyāsa's cryptic evaluation of action that the human agent and only the human agent is responsible for seems to be only a flat rebuttal of Yudhiṣṭhira's belief that he has done something fundamentally wrong. This evaluation of royal violence is consistent with Vyāsa's overall views, as expressed recently in the "Persuasion of Yudhiṣṭhira" (e.g., at 23.8–14). Vyāsa will shortly counsel Yudhiṣṭhira to perform expiation (*prāyaścitta*) to undo the wrong that was involved in his fighting the war. Again we must bear in mind the fundamentally rhetorical nature of this speech. Vyāsa's purpose is to get Yudhiṣṭhira moving on the path of kingship, not to state consistently a philosophy of human action.

32.19. *people require that good and evil be accounted for: athābhipattir lokasya kartavyā śubhapāpayoḥ.* The word *abhipatti* signifies, broadly, "apprehension," but the word involves more than merely cognitive "apprehension." More than the intellectual differentiation of good and evil events, the apprehension signified by *abhipatti* is the taking, or assigning, of responsibility for good and evil as deeds—deeds which, as all *karma-s,* start with a person's desires and end with that person's enduring the future consequences of his or her deed. The argument that everything that happens is mere chance involves no such *abhipatti* of the good and evil people experience. Vyāsa implies that he thinks people cannot, or should not, abide such chaos.

33.12. *we shall free our selves: śarīrāṇi vimokṣyāmaḥ.* As at 12.13.1 ff., the word *śarīra,* which means "body," is used here in the sense of "self."

34.4. *Time, in its characteristic revolution: kālaḥ paryāyadharmeṇa.* Again I take *dharma* as "particular characteristic." See the note to 12.31.45 above.

34.12. *king, you are therefore commanded: tadartham iṣyate rājan;* literally, "on account of that (the falsehood that ensnares your mind) it is commanded, king, [that you perform expiation]." As they have all failed to persuade Yudhiṣṭhira that he is not guilty of wrongdoing, Vyāsa reluctantly tells him he must perform the expiation.

34.32. *the people who underlie your rule:* the *prakṛtis* of the kingdom, those basic elements out of which the king's rule and his achievements grow. In some contexts the term *prakṛti* refers to the citizens of the kingdom; in others it refers to the king's ministers; and in still others to such entities and institutions as the royal treasury and the army. The term is limited to people in this context, and "citizens" would seem more likely than "ministers," but the more abstract, somewhat didactic phrase I have offered here eliminates the need to make the distinction.

34.35. *the army of Death: kṛtāntabala.* See *MBh* 11.4.8–9 for a description of the psychology behind this point.

35.4. *an old maid: didhiṣū,* a term for a relatively undesirable bride, that is, a widow or a woman whose younger sisters are already married (signifying that some families have refused to take her as a bride). As the next item on this list refers to a man who marries a widow, I have taken this term here as referring to the unmarried woman who has been previously spurned. The

harsh term "old maid" seems to express accurately some of the opprobrium attached to the unfortunate woman in such a position in traditional India.

35.6 (1). The selling of Soma is stated here to be an expiable offense; later, in śloka 31, it is declared not to be an offense if one "understands the principle," or the "essence" (*tattva*) of it. Whether because of the ancient migrations away from the native habitats of the Soma plant, or for more complicated reasons (perhaps Soma had been procured by trade from very ancient times), it seems Soma had to be purchased for the rites in India; at least the purchase of Soma from vendors was ritually dramatized in Soma rituals. The ambivalence toward the Soma vendor expressed in this chapter is also evident in the brahminic descriptions of the rituals; see *HDhŚ*, 2: 1141 ff., especially 1143, where he notes that some of the texts describe the beating of the Soma vendor and the seizing of the Soma from him. For information on Soma and its identity, see the glossary.

35.6 (2). *each earlier one is more blameworthy than the following: pūrvaḥ pūrvas tu garhitaḥ.* The words are clear by themselves, but what is the scope of this statement? Surely it cannot extend all the way back to 3a, for then sleeping late would be a worse offense than serving as priest for everyone in a village, not to speak of murder.

35.17–19. The ideas here, and some of the exact wording, occur at 56.29–30 and are identified there as "two ślokas of the great seer Uśanas." In brahmin-sanctioned culture, brahmicide, *brahmahatyā*, is the worst possible offense (or nearly so), and the idea comes to be the standard for heinous crime. Interestingly, the word for abortion, *bhrūṇahatyā*, also comes to be used for brahmicide, *brahmahatyā*.

35.22. *Uddālaka had Śvetaketu fathered by one of his pupils:* This incident seems unknown in earlier Sanskrit literature; Macdonell and Keith *(Vedic Index)*, know nothing of it. But at *MBh* 1.113 we are told that it was Śvetaketu who proscribed women's original sexual freedom, prescribing for them conjugal fidelity to their husbands. This story is topically appropriate to the point here, and some relationship between the two passages is conceivable.

35.23 (1). *is not bound fast by the deed: na nibadhyate;* that is, the deed does not stay with him as bad karma. I have interpreted *nibadhyate* here as an ellipsis of *karmaṇā / karmabhir nibadhyate* as found at Manu 6.74 and as occurs in the *BhG* at 4.22, 5.12 (an interesting instance because, like 12.35.23 here, it has the word *kāmakāreṇa*, "gratifying one's own wishes" in the prior half of the verse), and at 18.17. It is parallel to the frequently expressed theme "he is not stained with an evil deed" (*na sa pāpena lipyate*) that occurs just below at 12.35.24d.

35.23 (2). *does not make his living by it:* I take *sampravartate* in the sense of "live upon," "subsist by" doing something; and I construe each of the distinct words of verse 23cd as a separate stipulation with the *na ced* ("if not").

35.25. *A lie may be spoken:* See 12.159.28 and the note to that śloka.

35.29. *likewise the failure to give . . . : sakāraṇaṃ tathā tīrthe 'tīrthe vāpratipādanam.* The word *sakāraṇa*, an adjective modifying *(a)pratipādanam*, signifies giving (or failure to give) that is "caused" by some agency or force beyond the giver. The final pāda of the stanza must be construed as if it read *vāpratipādanam (pratipādanaṃ vā)*, the first word of which, "non-giving," must be construed with *tīrthe*, "a worthy recipient," and the second of which, "giving," must be taken with *atīrthe*, "an unworthy recipient." Belvalkar construes this somewhat differently.

35.30. *Making a wicked woman atone: striyas tathā apacāriṇyaḥ niṣkṛtiḥ.* Though it seems clear that adultery is what is meant by *apacāriṇī* (so Bühler, and Doniger and Smith, at Manu 8.317; the word literally means "wandering off, straying"), I think the more general expression is clear enough and preferable. The word *niṣkṛti* is somewhat ambiguous here. Normally in the *MBh* it means "expiation, or atonement," and that is how I have taken it here (though here it must be understood in a causative sense: "It is not wrong to make her atone"), because the word's normal sense in this text does work fine here. But the word can also mean "expulsion," which suggests divorce: Ganguli, in the "Roy translation," takes *niṣkṛti* as "casting off." Or it can mean "neglecting," and Nīlakaṇṭha seems to construe it, basically, in this sense: "Treating her with contempt" (*dhikkaraṇam*), "keeping her at a distance, as if she were a slave, (offering her) only food and clothing, and abstaining from sex with her."

35.31. *Now the selling of Soma is not sinful if one fully understands the essence of it:* According to Nīlakaṇṭha this essence of Soma is that when the Gods are refreshed with it they shower men with the things men desire, that is, that it benefits both the human and divine worlds. See below, 12.80.13, and compare this way of exculpation to the "power of discernment" discussed later in the *ADh* (see 12.130.3 and the note to it).

36.4. *in "the austere way": kṛcchrabhojin.* Nīlakaṇṭha explains this term in coordination with the *māse māse samaśnan* of pāda c to refer to certain cyclic schemes of fasting. He describes the *kṛcchrabhoja* scheme as eating for three days in the morning, then for three days in the evening, then for three days eating only what comes to one unsolicited, and finally eating nothing for three days. This is the same description that Āpastamba gives at 1.9.27.7; Gautama 26.1–17 describes a more elaborate version of this "Austere" penance, but it has the same restriction of food at its heart. Gautama goes on to describe (26.18–20) two more severe forms of this penance, the "Highly Austere" (*atikṛcchra*) and "Austere Highly Austere" penance (*kṛcchrātikṛcchra*), which follow the same pattern of eating, but reduce what is consumed to just one mouthful in the Highly Austere penance, and to water alone in the Austere Highly Austere.

The "moon by moon" (*māse māse*) scheme, he says, involves the same pattern, but with a lengthening of the periods of time upon which it is based: Seven-day periods in the odd-numbered months, and eight-day periods in the even-numbered months. The latter scheme Nīlakaṇṭha describes would presumably consist of lunar days *(tithi-s)*, though Nīlakaṇṭha does not say this. Each lunar month consists of thirty equal lunar days from one new moon (the conjunction of the sun and the moon) to the next, and is divided into two halves of fifteen days each. Nīlakaṇṭha's second scheme would seem to involve a further, rough subdivision of the fifteen lunar days of each fortnight into two halves. By alternating between seven-day and eight-day periods every month, the reckoning of days would commence with the new moon every sixty lunar days. Nīlakaṇṭha's explanation, as I understand it, seems plausible, but it is not possible to say if it is what the *MBh* had in mind here. The term *tithi* is well known in the *MBh*.

36.11. *brahmins observant of the various practices of restraint: brāhmaṇebyaḥ niyatebhyaḥ.* The *niyamas* referred to here are various observances and vows pious people undertake. See the note on "vows" (*vratas*) at *MBh* 11.1.20.

36.14. *setting out on the Great Journey: mahāprasthāna.* See the second note to *MBh* 11.1.20.

36.15. *the "Soma libation of Bṛhaspati":* A one-day Soma sacrifice done to attain "the luster of *brahman*" (*brahmavarcas*) as well as for other reasons. See *HDhŚ*, 2: 1211, n. 2642.

36.18. *Women who exert themselves: yattāḥ.* Perhaps this should be understood as *yatāḥ*, "restrained, observant," which is how Nīlakaṇṭha explains it.

36.22. *by observing the vow for a year: saṃvatsaraṃ vratī bhūtvā;* either "the expiatory observance set for a brahmin-slayer" (*brahmahatyāvrata*) or the wearing of the donkey-hide. Should the word *vratin* be interpreted in a more restricted way? Should it be taken to mean that he should "observe the vows (of a student)," that is, "wear the girdle of *muñja*-grass, a staff and so forth?" This gloss of *vratin* is Bühler's paraphrase of the commentators Govindarāja, Kullūka, and Sarvajñanārāyaṇa as they interpret the same term in a similar *prāyaścitta* setting at Manu 11.224 (11.225 in Bühler's translation, and in Smith and Doniger); see Bühler's note there. But, as Bühler further notes there, Medhātithi interprets the term *vratin* more generally with, "let him resolve to abstain from that which is not forbidden by good men." I have opted here for a more general sense of the word, because taking the *vrata* here to refer to the wearing of the donkey hide specified in the previous stanza would seem to stipulate an expiation more appropriately severe to the offense. Of course the word *vratin* could be taken in a completely generic way, as meaning simply "observing vows (i.e., special practices)."

36.25. *but he who would save his ancestors should then always get married:* Some manuscript traditions insert the word "again" into verse 25ab, and this word leads Nīlakaṇṭha to interpret the admonition here to marry as stipulating that the younger brother should marry again in the interest of ensuring the continuity of the paternal lineage. Verse 25cd would then make clear that his first wife had no fault in the matter. Belvalkar's text, which rightly excludes the "again," gives the seemingly more plausible sense that the unmarried elder brother should, after expiating the wrong of not marrying before his younger brother, set things right by

marrying. It makes sense further, then, that the text would address the issue of whether the woman who marries such a man shares in his wrong.

36.26. *After she has given birth: bhajane.* The reading of this word (in pāda a) occurs only in the Kaśmīrī Śāradā manuscript and is very much the *lectio difficilior.* Belvalkar was right to adopt it, but I do not follow his plausible interpretation of its semantic value ("cohabitation"). The word may, even more plausibly, mean the "separation, the division" (of a child from its mother) and this makes a good and complete sense.

36.33. *Sāvitrī formula:* The *Gāyatrī mantra, Ṛg Veda* 3.62.10, the "mother of the Veda," which is the first verse of the Veda taught to a boy at his initiation. It is then recited by all such pious initiates every morning and evening.

36.39. *one of the great sins: mahāpātaka,* one of the five great offenses, enumerated in the following way at Manu 11.54: Brahmicide, drinking *surā* liquor, theft, violating the teacher's bed, and association with someone guilty of any of these offenses.

37.8. *stealing, lying, and doing injury to others are Lawful in some specific circumstances: ādānam anṛtaṃ hiṃsā dharmo vyāvasthikaḥ.* I take *vyāvasthikaḥ* to be an adjective derived from the noun *vyavasthā,* in the sense of "a particular condition or situation." The more common pattern of derivation for this kind of adjective would lead us to expect *vaiyavasthika,* but Sanskrit knows *vyāvahārika* from *vyavahāra,* where we would expect *vaiyavahārika.* My thanks to John Smith of Cambridge University for leading me to see that this way of understanding *vyāvasthika* fits the sense of the text better than any other.

37.9. *There is the distinction between the omission and commission of ordinary acts and Vedic acts: apravṛttiḥ pravṛttiś ca dvaividhyaṃ lokavedayoḥ.* I believe the abstract ideas of "omission and commission" fit this context well and form the basic idea behind the stanza. But these words can be understood as a synonymous expression for *nivṛttiḥ pravṛttiś ca,* understood to mean "ceasing to perform one's proper Law in one's family, town, and kingdom (as an act of renunciation to pursue ultimate beatitude) and performing one's proper Law in one's family, town, and kingdom." The following śloka glosses these two words in terms of this fundamental ethical opposition.

37.11. *heaven or something leading to heaven: daivaṃ ca daivayuktaṃ ca.* My interpretation of these two words in 11c is based upon the opposition of "life and death," *prāṇaś ca pralayaś ca* in 11d. "Life and death" in 11d are two results of ordinary actions, so *daivaṃ ca daivayuktaṃ ca* must be two results of Vedic actions. As *daiva* can mean "celestial, heavenly," there is no innovation in seeing the implicit phrase *daivaṃ phalam* to mean *svarga,* though, of course, *daiva* is normally used otherwise.

37.14 (1). Text Amendment: I read *na hi te dharmāḥ* instead of Belvalkar's *na hi taṃ dharmam* in pāda c. The *te* is read by $Ś_1$, $K_{1.3}$, $D_{1.4}$, all of S, and Arjunamiśra's commentary, while the *tam* is read only by K_2 and K_4. The *dharmāḥ* is read by K_3, $D_{1.4}$, all of S, and Arjunamiśra's commentary, while *dharmam* is read by the first Kaśmīrī Devanāgarī manuscript and many other Northern manuscripts generally relegated to second- and third-tier status in the critical edition ($K_{1.2.4}$, V_1, B, Dn and $D_{2.3.5.6.8}$). One of the soundest of Sukthankar's editorial principles for the critical edition is the agreement of the Northwest and Southern manuscript traditions and that principle points to the amendment I suggest here.

37.14 (2). *One should exclude completely all the laws of particular ethnic groups: jātiśreṇyadhivāsānāṃ kuladharmāṃś ca sarvataḥ / varjayan.* The subject of the verb here is not specified and poses the interesting question of just who presides over processes of expiation. Typically, when social aspects of dharma are under discussion, the subject is presumed to be the king, but that is certainly not clear here. I take the purport of this sentence to be that all the dharmas peculiar to different corporate groups (as opposed to the dharmas for Vedic rites, the dharmas of the different *āśramas,* and *samānadharmas,* "universal virtues") are to be excluded from the purview of *prāyaścitta.*

37.14 (3). *for these are not really Laws, since there is no Merit in them: na hi te dharmāḥ yeṣāṃ dharmo na vidyate;* an explanation for why these corporate mores are excluded from the possibility of *prāyaścitta.* Concerning the reading of the text here, see the first note to this stanza, above.

If my interpretation of these two sentences is correct, the word *dharma* occurs in them three times in three distinct senses. To paraphrase: "The dharmas (mores) of [various corporate groups] do not have expiatory acts to make up for their violation, for these mores, or laws, are not real dharmas (Laws), because there is no Merit (dharma) in them." I take this last use of dharma, the essence of "Law" that distinguishes "Law" from mere custom or rule, to refer to the unseen, transcendently grounded, enduring, benefit-generating power of a Vedically revealed injunction, that is "Merit" in the conventions of this translation.

37.16. *mucus-tree,* śleṣmātaka, Cordia obliqua (Cordia latifolia *Roxb.*): See Hooker, *Flora* (4: 137). The quotation in the footnote is from Nairne, *Flowering Plants* (194), which misprints "*obliqua*" as "*obligera.*" To that H. Santapau, *The Flora of Khandala on the Western Ghats of India* (146), adds, concerning all the *Cordia dichotoma,* "The unripe fruit is pickled; the ripe fruit is eaten and has a sweet flavor, but is very mucilaginous. Both monkeys and birds seem to be attracted by the young fruits and in consequence such fruits are seldom found on trees."

37.18 (1). *buzzards: bhāsa-s.* Two words for "vulture" are used regularly in the *MBh,* sometimes side by side: *bhāsa* and *gṛdhra.* Several species of vulture have been known to occur in India, and it is not possible to determine from within the *MBh* the particular species to which these two words referred. For the sake of representing the text's distinction with some measure of consistency and accuracy, I generally translate the less frequently occurring *bhāsa* with "buzzard" (in the American and not the British sense of that word, that is, as referring to any of various vultures, such as the turkey vulture; in British usage "buzzard" refers to various of the Falconidae, particularly members of the genus *Buteo*). I have tried consistently to render the more common word *gṛdhra* with "vulture." It is conceivable that the bird referred to as *bala, baḍa,* and *vaḍa,* which I believe to be a "jungle crow" (*Corvus macrorhynchus culminatus;* see the note to *MBh* 11.16.7) is some kind of vulture too.

37.18 (2). *herons: bakas.* Though the word *baka* may also refer to birds closely related to or similar to herons, such as ibises, cranes, or perhaps even pelicans, it seems that most occurrences of *baka* in the *MBh* describe the habits of herons. Herons fish by standing very still in the water and then striking quickly, whereas ibises and pelicans do not fish in that stealthy way, and cranes consume a wider diet and are less consistently attached to bodies of water for their food. Herons nest in trees, typically in colonies, often in the company of ibises. But since the latter usually live in large flocks, they typically nest in shrubs and bushes as well as trees, while pelicans, also colony-dwellers, nest on the ground near water, and cranes nest on the ground out in open fields. So I translate *baka* (written as *vaka* in some editions) as "heron" unless there is a reason in some particular context to believe that some other bird is meant. The word *kaṅka,* which is usually taken to mean "heron," does, I believe, sometimes refer to herons, but usually signifies "stork" in the *MBh.*

37.18 (3). *storks: kaṅka.* See the note to *MBh* 11.16.7.

37.33. khadira: *Acacia catechu,* "[a] small or medium-sized deciduous tree. . . . The heartwood is dark-red, hard and is not eaten by white ants. The wood contains tannin, and after boiling the extract known as *Cutch* is obtained" (Bor, *Manual,* 83). *Cutch,* or catechu, is the light brown or olive-colored dye used to make khaki (*New Columbia Encyclopedia,* s.v. "catechu.") The author's point seems to be that *khadira* floats no better than stone.

37.36. *a man who harbors no resentments: anasūyaka.* This personal quality, to not be a spiteful grouch, has a prominent place in the catalog of virtues recommended in *The Book of Peace.* I think the specification of this virtue here is meant to be suggestive of a whole range of virtuous personal qualities that may make some people (generally it is brahmins the text has in mind), who would otherwise be unworthy, suitable recipients of generosity. (They would be unworthy because they are not *sat* or *sādhu* people, their lives do not center on the Vedas, the vows, and the learning that occupy the attention of pious and energetic brahmins.) This virtue is especially germane, however, as it bears upon the inner human economy of the gift-transaction. A giver moved by pity who would make a gift to a miserable person often craves gratitude for the act, and at the least does not want to face any rancor or spite from the recipient of his largess. So, in sum, generous giving should usually go to support the elite that preserves and extends the religious and intellectual traditions of brahminic culture: but it is permissible to give, from compassion, material support to impoverished brahmins lapsing into non-brahminism if they have the appropriate inner qualities and are not offensive (*[an-]apakārin* in 37b).

38.8. *the heavenly river of the three courses:* See the note above to *MBh* 12.29.62.

38.12. *the basic reality and functioning of the inner spirit: adhyātmagatitattva.*

38.22. Technical Note: *(the way those afflicted) . . . await (Parjanya): āśaṃsānāḥ*, an irregularly (for this root) formed middle participle of the present stem. This reading is attested only by the Śāradā manuscript, and the morphological oddity certainly makes it *lectio difficilior.*

38.30. *like the moon amidst the stars: nakṣatrair iva candramāḥ.* I take *nakṣatra* here in its general sense of "heavenly body" or "star," because the simple relationship of a centrally dominant entity to several peripheral subordinate entities is the point of the comparison. More narrowly, the *nakṣatras* are a series of twenty-seven or twenty-eight small constellations through which the moon moves in the course of its monthly cycle. These constellations are sometimes conceived of as so many daughters of the Progenitor Dakṣa, who gave them to the moon as wives. Though this idea is known to the *MBh* (see 1.60.12), and though it could be read in the words here, it seems to me not to be the sense of *nakṣatra* that best fits this context.

38.32. *his chariot made of the immortal nectar:* From late Vedic times on, the moon's waxing and waning was often represented as its alternately being consumed by the Gods and then filling up again with the food or drink of immortality (see Macdonell, *Vedic Mythology,* 112–13). I am not familiar with the motif of the moon's riding on a chariot except from Daniélou (*Hindu Polytheism,* 99–100), who refers to the later *Kālikā Purāṇa.*

38.35. *like the king of the stars:* Another reference to the moon, and another occurs in the next śloka, 12.38.36. In *The Indian Theogony,* Sukumari Bhattacharji briefly describes a general and widespread mythic association of the moon with death and the after-life (156–57). Madeleine Biardeau and Alf Hiltebeitel have emphatically pointed out the general association of Yudhiṣṭhira with Yama, the lord of the dead and the underworld, who shares with Yudhiṣṭhira the epithet Dharmarāja, "King of Dharma" (see Madeleine Biardeau, *EMH,* pt. 4, 172, and pt. 5, 94–111; see also Alf Hiltebeitel, *The Cult of Draupadī,* 1: 432, n. 42, and 2: 50–51 and 128). Yudhiṣṭhira's false name in the *MBh*'s fourth book, the book of "the Pāṇḍavas' incognito," is Kaṅka, which is the word for the large, carrion-eating adjutant stork (*Leptopilos dubius*), which, standing five feet or taller, was the dominant living figure on the bloody battlefield after the war—a true "lord of the dead." (Storks, not "herons" [see my note to 11.16.7] are mentioned many times along with the other carrion-feeders that swarmed over the dead on the battlefield; see *MBh* 11.16 ff.) So the repeated mention of the cool-rayed moon in this scene ,which has Yudhiṣṭhira emerging from behind his cloud of hot, burning grief might be a further element of Yudhiṣṭhira's identity as a kind of psychopomp.

38.46. *welcoming banners: patākābhiś ca vedibhiḥ.* The word *vedin* is literally "carrying some message."

39.14. *approached the Gods with splendid riches: śrīmān daivatāny abhigamya ca.* Yudhiṣṭhira's first act upon reentering the city is to perform *pūjā* in the Bhārata palace. The word *śrīmat* (occurring here in the masculine singular form *śrīmān*) might signify "possessed of Royal Splendor" here. But I think the text is deliberately playing with the ambiguity of the word. As I said above, in the note to *MBh* 11.1.31, "The word *śrī* basically signifies 'manifest opulence or splendor' that makes one eminent," and that eminence may then become part of his legitimacy as a ruler for the one who possesses those riches. Here I take the word *śrī* to refer to the riches Yudhiṣṭhira carries to the Gods for *pūjā,* the jewels and fragrances. In 39.15, after performing *pūjā,* he is said to be *śrīmān* "once again." I take this second occurrence of "possessed of *śrī*" to mean that he is "possessed of Royal Splendor" after having offered the riches to the Gods.

39.22. *Cārvāka:* In later Indian philosophy the doctrine of metaphysical materialism is said to have originated with a thinker named Cārvāka. This is the only episode of the *MBh* in which the name Cārvāka occurs. See *MBh* 9.63.38 for the broken Duryodhana's dying prediction of this attempt of his friend Cārvāka to avenge his, Duryodhana's, foul death.

39.33. *trying to keep himself safe by disguising himself as a wandering mendicant: parivrājakarūpeṇa hitaṃ tasya cikīrṣati.* It is unusual, but not unknown (see J. S. Speijer's *Sanskrit Syntax,* ##264 and 267, Rem.), that the demonstrative pronoun serves as a reflexive. The phrase "*hitaṃ tasya*" cannot refer to Duryodhana's welfare. Not only is Duryodhana dead and beyond most assistance, Cārvāka's diatribe was simply an attempt to harm Yudhiṣṭhira.

39.39. *Badarī:* The Himālayan retreat of Nara and Nārāyaṇa (see the LCP s.v. "Badarī")—an interesting site for this Rākṣasa's cultivation of power!

39.46. *the punishing rod of the* brahman: *brahmadaṇḍena.* This word also means "by the rod of the *brahman,* the Vedas," the "speech" (*vāc*) that constitutes the power or might (and the "poison") of brahmins. See above at 15.9.

40.2. Technical Note: *"precious carpets":* I am not completely persuaded of Belvalkar's emended reading here of *sevya-* (*āstaraṇasaṃvṛtte*), although I admire it as astute, and I am not sure anything else would be better. At the same time the $Ś_1$ K_1 reading, which has *sa-* in the place of the *se-* prior to *-vyāstaraṇasaṃvṛtte,* is worth further consideration.

40.5. *Sudharman:* See the note above at *MBh* 11.26.24.

40.10. *pots of . . . copper: audumbarāḥ,* a little-attested meaning of this word. But the alternative, "made of the wood of the fig-tree," is obviously unlikely.

41.10. *the copious Saṃjaya: saṃjayam . . . ṛddham.* The adjective *ṛddha* certainly is *lectio difficilior* and is the correct reading here (most manuscript traditions "correct" this to the banal *vṛddha,* "mature, wizened; an elder," while others change it to *dṛḍha,* "steady, reliable." I construe it as a reference to Saṃjaya's narration of all the events of the war to Dhṛtarāṣṭra. More pejorative renderings of this would have been "verbose," or "prolix."

42.1. *the first-month memorial rites for those who were slain in the war . . . for each one individually: śrāddhāni kārayām āsa teṣāṃ pṛthak.* These are the *śrāddha* memorial rites done for an individual on the monthly anniversaries of death for the first year after death (the *ekoddiṣṭaśrāddha*). The current day is the one-month anniversary of the end of the war and the cremation of the dead bodies (see *MBh* 12.1.1–2; the first day after the end of the battle would seem to serve as the marker of the day of death for those that died). See *HDhŚ,* 3: 737, n. 1425, and 4: 516–20.

42.2. *King Dhṛtarāṣṭra gave the funeral gifts for his sons: dhṛtarāṣṭro dadau rājā putrāṇām aurdhvadehikam.* The adjective "funeral" (*aurdhvadehika*) must refer to the various gifts itemized in the following verse ("cattle, riches, and diverse precious gems") and to the actual offerings made to the dead. Fathers do not perform the *śrāddha* for their sons, as elder brothers do not for younger brothers. These offerings are fundamentally offerings to *pitṛ-s,* "fathers," that is by juniors to deceased seniors. See *HDhŚ,* 4: 257 and 364.

42.4. *the Rākṣasa son of Hiḍimbā:* Yudhiṣṭhira performs the rite for Ghaṭotkaca. Ghaṭotkaca had no son or wife, no one junior to him. The king is the last resort for the performance of such rites when there is no one else eligible. Of course Bhīma is alive and present, but (see the note to 42.2) Bhīma is not eligible to perform the rite. Yudhiṣṭhira is acting as king in the case of Dhṛṣṭadyumna and Abhimanyu as well, though Abhimanyu's wife Uttarā could have performed the rite (see *HDhŚ,* 4: 257). In the case of Karṇa and Droṇa, Yudhiṣṭhira is acting as the seniormost eligible junior of those men, rather than as the king.

43.1. *now clean and bright:* That is, the *āśauca* connected with the dead is behind him.

43.2–16 (1). In these fourteen stanzas (starting with "tiger of the Yadus" in 2) Yudhiṣṭhira praises Kṛṣṇa with about one hundred different names, epithets, adjectives, or descriptive phrases. My translation distinguishes ninety-nine items. There is uncertainty about the number because of some ambiguities of syntax in the list, but it would seem that the author of this litany of names, epithets, and descriptions had either the number one hundred, or, perhaps, the special number one hundred and eight, in mind in constructing the list. The second number has plausibility if we count the names in the list somewhat more liberally than I have done in the translation—by including the two repetitions of Kṛṣṇa that occur within the list at 11c and 16a, the two "extra" instances of "one," (*eka*) at 6c and 7c, the "extra" instance of *puruṣa* at 8c, the "extra" instance of "unfallen one" (*acyuta*) at 10d, the three terms referring to Kṛṣṇa that occur in the chapter prior to the beginning of the litany itself (Dāśārha, lotus-eyed, and Kṛṣṇa), and the three words referring to him in the narrative following the litany (Kṛṣṇa, lotus-eyed, and pre-eminent Yādava). We then have one hundred and eleven words naming Kṛṣṇa.

This litany and others like it elsewhere in the *Mahābhārata* (see for example *MBh* 5.68.3 ff. and 6.32 (Chapter 10 of the *BhG*), and the immense, one-thousand-name litany that occurs at 13.139.14 ff.) provide fascinating windows that look out upon the complex histories of the devotional religious traditions of India, but at the same time they present a translator with great problems. First of all such a litany is a special kind of poetic creation, one in which, as in all poetry, the substance of the words themselves is essential. In these litanies the names

and descriptors of the God do not function as names usually do, as markers in a complex web of narrative or discourse registering the presence, location, and continuities of some entity in that larger whole. Rather they are devices connecting some features of the world or history to God, and then through God to each other, and working, through the special conglomeration of the litany, to stimulate the awe, admiration, and worship of the devotee. The rhythmic cascade of these connections produces a powerful emotional and religious effect, which seems to be a primary purpose of the litany.

Regrettably, though necessarily, these facts mean that such litanies cannot be translated into another linguistic and cultural situation. But there are problems even in making the list intelligible. Typically it is not required that names be semantically intelligible for them to perform their connective function. In the narrative portions of the *MBh* a name such as Gāndhārī, acquires most of its meaning by its consistent connection to a particular figure in the narrative who is defined by her attributes, actions, and associations; the name need not signify anything by itself to function well (and often it does not). But in a litany such as this, where there is no context in which the names function, the particular meanings of the names and descriptors are the only element of signification they perform. So a full and proper appreciation of a litany requires a full knowledge of the meanings of the names, and a translator has the formidable task of explaining the background of the names and descriptors in order to accomplish the goal of making them fully intelligible. I am forced to admit almost complete defeat here; I cannot even begin to accomplish this task satisfactorily. These names and descriptors are highly specific concretizations of myth and history which are often very, or even completely, obscure, and it is beyond the scope of a large work like this one to make a systematic presentation of all of these terms. Almost every item in the litany deserves to be (and some have been) a topic of research and reflection unto itself. Here I can do no more than give quite superficial glosses, or mere transcriptions, for these names.

Because of the different problems posed by the different items in the list (there are simple names, compound names, epithets, adjectives, adjective-phrases, and relative clauses), what I present in the translation is not uniform. I give the usual names of Kṛṣṇa and Viṣṇu (e.g., Keśava) in their usual (merely transcribed) forms. Where I can give a translation of a name or descriptor that I am reasonably sure of, I do so. When I regard a name or descriptor as too uncertain to translate, I merely transcribe it. It is impossible for me to comment upon these names here or discuss their interpretations, though I have given the cross-references for two passages of the *MBh* (Saṃjaya's explanation of several of Kṛṣṇa's names at *MBh* 5.68; and parts of the *Nārāyaṇīya* of the *ŚP,* where Kṛṣṇa explains some of these names to Arjuna.

43.2–16 (2). It is interesting to observe that certain important names of Kṛṣṇa do not occur in this list, such as Vāsudeva and Nārāyaṇa, both of which are explained in the glossing passages mentioned above (Vāsudeva at 5.68.3 and 12.328.36, and Nārāyaṇa at 5.68.10 and 12.328.35.).

43.4–7. *Sātvatas:* See *MBh* 5.68.7 and 12.330.11–13. *Viṣṇu, Jiṣṇu, Hari, Kṛṣṇa, Vaikuṇṭha, Supreme Person:* For Viṣṇu and Jiṣṇu, see 5.68.13; for Viṣṇu, 12.328.38; for "Supreme Person," see 5.68.10. See 5.68.5 and 12.330.14 for an explanation of the name Kṛṣṇa. *Vaikuṇṭha:* See 12.330.15. *Pṛśnigarbha:* See 12.328.40–42. *Śuciśravas:* See 12.330.15. *Hṛṣīkeśa:* See 5.68.9 and 12.330.1–2. *Ghṛtārcis:* See 12.330.19–20. *"lord Dāmodara":* See 5.68.8. and 12.328.39.

43.8. *Śipiviṣṭa* is a name of Viṣṇu (obscure because the word *śipi* is otherwise unknown) first used in two hymns dedicated to Viṣṇu in the *Ṛg Veda* (7.99 and 7.100), which, as is done here, refer to the God as "striding far," *urukrama.* Later Brahminic tradition understands the word basically to mean "bald"; see, for instance, *MBh* 12.330.6–7, though this passage calls Śipiviṣṭa an obscure or esoteric name (*guhyanāman*). The *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* offers an explanation of the name at 11.1.4.3–4, but it turns upon the equally obscure word *śipitá.* The possibility that the word *śipi* may be related to *śepa* (penis) has led some scholars to focus on phallic explanations; see Gonda, *Early Viṣṇuism,* 106. Geldner *(Der Rig-Veda)* and Renou (*Études Védiques et Pāṇinéenes,* 15: 41, 43) offer some learned suggestions for reflection but do not dispel the fog around this name.

43.9–10. *the Bull:* See 12.330.23 for Kṛṣṇa's word of explanation of this epithet. *Vṛṣākapi:* See 12.330.23–24.

45.8. *Always mindful of Law, he treated Kṛpa properly as his teacher:* His behavior to his former teacher Kṛpa is especially significant because of that one's participation in Aśvatthāman's gruesome night raid. See the "The End of the War" in the general introduction to this volume, and the LCP s.v. "Kṛpa."

45.15. The Kaustubha jewel was produced when the Gods churned the undying elixir from the ocean. See *MBh* 1.16.35.

46.3. *Lower Mind:* The description of Kṛṣṇa's meditation here employs the terminology of Sāṃkhya-Yoga, which will occur repeatedly in *The Laws for Gaining Absolute Freedom.*

46.14. *Bhārgava:* An allusion to the great battle between Rāma Jāmadagnya, serving as Ambā's champion, and Bhīṣma that is told at *MBh* 5.174–87.

46.33. *sapphires and crystals: masāragalvarkamaya.* As Pollock observes upon *Rām.* 3.41.27 (in Goldman, ed., *Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki,* vol. 3), this compound is obscure. There it describes the face of the marvelous deer that lured Rāma from Sītā. Given the frequency of occurrence of the deep blue color of most sapphires (*nīla*) in the description of the deer's face in *Rām.* 3.40–41 and in descriptions of Kṛṣṇa in the *MBh;* and given the frequency in *MBh* descriptions of Kṛṣṇa of juxtapositions of bright and dark, I, like Pollock, take this compound as a *dvaṃdva* (a compound of aggregation), and I take *māsara* as "sapphire."

47.4. *he lay there with supreme splendor: paramayā lakṣmyā.* The word *lakṣmī* also refers to the Goddess Lakṣmī, Śrī, a way of representing the opulent productivity of the Earth, especially the products of gem mines, that is a feature of kingly majesty. Ambivalence over male sexuality is one of the main themes of Bhīṣma's representation in the *Mahābhārata,* and the irony of the inappropriately celibate, dying pseudo-patriarch Bhīṣma lying just off the earth as an image of the setting sun, together "with Lakṣmī," is a deliberate expression of that theme.

47.6a. Typographical Error: Read *gaṇair* for *gaṇar.*

47.8. *Whose Navel is the Lotus: padmanābha,* an allusion to the Vaiṣṇaiva cosmogony in which a lotus growing from Viṣṇu's navel constitutes the first phase of the world's coming into existence out of the ultimate, eternal being (i.e., Viṣṇu). The biological representation of the lotus occupies the same place as another biological representation, the Golden Egg, in some early Brahminic cosmogonies. The egg and the lotus both serve to "grow" the God Brahmā into being, who then uses the material substance provided by the egg or the lotus to begin the creation of the world.

47.10. Technical Note: *the statement I wish to proclaim: vācaṃ jigamiṣāmi yām.* The critical edition uncovered this verb, literally "I wish to go," in place of the easier *jigadiṣāmi,* "I wish to utter." The newer, more difficult reading is supported by a good range of manuscripts and is definitely not plain. One old Vedic instance of this verb being used causatively in the sense of leading something "to light" gives a soft precedent for construing the verb the same way here—"this statement which I wish to (make) go to (public attention)."

47.14. Technical Note: *I adore the adorable one: upāsyam upāsmahe.* This verb and adjective occur in the Sanskrit text only at 47.20, at the end of this series of descriptions.

47.16. *Whom they praise* . . . : Bhīṣma names different genres of Vedic text, though *niṣad* is otherwise unknown.

47.17. *as four selves inhabiting Existence:* Arjunamiśra says the four names are Viṣṇu, Hari, Nara, and Nārāyaṇa. But it seems more likely that the text here refers instead to the Sātvata or Pāñcarātra doctrine of the four *vyūha-s,* the "manifestations," of the supreme being in the world as Vāsudeva, Saṃkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna, and Aniruddha, as Nīlakaṇṭha states. This doctrine is developed in 12.326, in the *Nārāyaṇīya* near the end of *The Laws for Gaining Absolute Freedom.*

47.26. uktha: Again, a genus of Vedic text, a particular kind of recitation used in the sacrificial ritual.

47.30. *sound-combinations:* A reference to *sandhi,* the phenomenon, carefully observed by Sanskrit grammarians, of speech sounds being altered by surrounding speech sounds. The word *sandhi* means "junction," or "union," and refers to the temporal contiguity of the altered and altering sounds.

47.31 (1). *womb of immortality: amṛtayoni.* One of the themes of this stanza is the idea that ultimate beatitude is gained while observing the rules of dharma (see the next note), so "Right Order," in addition to being the "womb of immortality," is also "born of the Immortal." That is, the Immortal, namely, Kṛṣṇa's ultimate and transcendent form, is the source of Right Order in the world.

47.31 (2). *who stretches across the fields the barrier ridge: setu,* a word that eventually becomes a common expression for law, and which has that sense here. These *levées* serve both as boundaries between fields (whence the sense "law") and as causeways or walkways for easy traveling. Seeing only the second of these uses here, Nīlakaṇṭha glosses *setu* with *taraṇopāyam yogadharmam,* "a way to cross, that is, the 'religion' of the discipline of meditation." This one-dimensional interpretation then leads him to interpret the term *aṅga* (limb) in pāda c unnaturally as "sense organ." It is much less forced to see "activities that aim at Merit" (*dharmārthavyavahāra,* i.e., the various duties and practices of dharma) as the "limbs" of the body of, as the components that make up, this *setu,* this *levée* that God has stretched across the fields for the strictly observant (the *santaḥ*).

47.31 (3). *barrier ridge: setu.* There is probably intentional, perhaps even etymologically intended, resonance between the words *ṛtena* and *amṛta* in pāda b. The same is true for the designation of Kṛṣṇa that Bhīṣma uses in this stanza, *satya,* "the True," and the words *satāṃ setum* in 31ab.

47.34. *surrounded by the sixteen attributes: ṣoḍaśabhir guṇaiḥ.* Probably the "Lower Mind," or manas, the five faculties of sense, the five faculties of action, and the five general elements that make up the outer world; so Nīlakaṇṭha.

47.35. *they stay at the level of Existence: sattvastha.* By this term I understand a state of meditation in which the yogi is believed to have stilled the operation of all the lower strata of his normal being (i.e., his body, his sensory reception of objects outside himself, the cognitive processing of sensory information carried out by the Lower Mind, the manas, and, presumably, the entertainment of ego-organized memories, feelings, imaginings, etc.). *Sattva* is a term that refers, in such usages as this one, to the totality of one's particular being, the "Field," exclusive of the postulated conscious energy, the Person, the "Knower of the Field." Sometimes, in other contexts, the buddhi (which is sometimes, though not always, to be understood as the Higher Mind, occupies this position on the ontological ladder.

47.39. *the sleep of yoga meditation upon each of the four oceans in turn: catuḥsamudraparyāyayoganidrā.* A rather literal, but still very uncertain rendering of this compound. Viṣṇu's "sleep of yoga meditation" occurs upon a bed of waters (see 12.335.58; at *MBh* 1.19.13 this bed is said to be the waters of the ocean; it is worth noting that the "yoga-sleep" at 1.19.13 is said to be the *adhyātmayoganidrā,* "the yoga-sleep of the Super Self"), but I am not familiar with any alternation among "four oceans." Nīlakaṇṭha (basically followed by Ganguli), referring to the homology of oceans with "bellies" in 47.41 just below, says that "oceans" here is a synonym of "desires," though he does not explain any further.

47.40. *the one lotus in the navel of the Unborn One of Lotus Eyes:* All the stanzas of this hymn praise Hari, Nārāyaṇa, Kṛṣṇa, Viṣṇu as manifested in some wonderful, transcendently important reality within the world. Here he is praised as being the "lotus of creation" that grows from the navel of the Lord as he sleeps upon the cosmic waters during an interval between epochs of the world's existence. The lotus growing from Nārāyaṇa-Viṣṇu's navel is the first manifestation of the material world that serves as the seat of the world-creator's—typically Brahmā's—creation activity.

47.44. *the Quarters of the Horizon:* the *diśaḥ.* The first of the five elements, *ākāśa,* or, as here, *kha,* is a substance perceived as both extended "space" that is unoccupied *and* as the medium for the propagation of sound, which is apprehended by the perceptual faculty of the ears. That is the basic reason for the connection between the quarters of the horizon and the ears.

47.45. *who, they say, preserves the five kinds of objects of sense, by means of their unique attributes:* An interesting śloka; I quote it in full: *viṣaye vartamānānāṃ yaṃ taṃ vaiśeṣikair guṇaiḥ / prāhur viṣayagoptāraṃ tasmai goptrātmane namaḥ // 45 //.* The genitive absolute assumes *indriyāṇām* ("the five sense-faculties"), which is supplied in a less elliptical passage at *MBh* 3.34.37. Belvalkar glosses, "God is the protector of the *viṣayas* inasmuch as He has endowed the *viṣayas* with distinctive qualities which preserve their individuality" (critical notes to *MBh* 12.47.45, *Mahābhārata,* 13: 656). Nīlakaṇṭha (at B. 12.47.70) offers a more interesting interpretation, one that motivates God's preservation of the consistency of the sense objects in the notion that perceiving subjects distort their perceptions of sensory objects based upon subjective elements in their experience of particular things in the world. Nīlakaṇṭha's interpretation is interesting and would add extra energy to the śloka, but it is, I think, unwarranted, and it hinges upon taking *vaiśeṣikair guṇaiḥ* ("distinctive, or unique, attributes") in a way that is not found elsewhere in the *MBh* (he takes the word in the later sense of *viśeṣaja,* "relating to, or deriving from, specific, individual objects"). The word *vaiśeṣika* occurs in two other instances in the *MBh,* at 11.2.20 (which is repeated at 12.317.19) and at 12.308.23; in both instances the word means simply "distinct, or distinguished" with the added sense of "excellent, outstanding, preeminent." Here at 12.47.45 the word means primarily "distinctive, different, separate, unique," but it is the same fundamental use of the word as in its other *MBh* occurrences.

47.55. *You who stand beyond the five elements are the final emancipation of beings:* This verse could be read more simply, to say, "You are the end [i.e., the dissolution, the cessation] of the five elements that stands beyond them." I think, however, that the more elaborate understanding of the verse is more consonant with the overall tenor of the text.

47.58. *in the three strata: triṣu vartmasu.* Not obvious. Nīlakaṇṭha says it refers to "the present and so on," that is, to past, present, and future. Ganguli follows him, translating "displayed in the Past, Present, and the Future." But when basically the same stanza occurs at 12.51.5 Nīlakaṇṭha is silent, and Ganguli there translates "in the three worlds." In the light of what follows immediately in both these locations (i.e., in light of 47.59ab and the fuller 51.6cd and 7), it seems to me that Ganguli was right the second time. I take the "three courses, paths, or ways" (the three *vartman-s*) to refer to the three distinct layers of the cosmos, "the three worlds," typically referred to as the three *lokas.* So I follow Ganguli's second, his independent, interpretation, though I translate the text's two-dimensional image of "three paths," or "courses," with the word "strata." Bhīṣma sees remarkable, divine manifestations of Kṛṣṇa on the earth, in the atmosphere, and in the empyrean sky.

47.60. *atasī: Linum usitatissimum,* common flax, a plant with blue flowers, not yellow as the Roy translation has it. The motif of a stark contrast between light and dark is common in Sanskrit literature. This specific contrast between Kṛṣṇa's dark blue body and his yellow garment is a recurring theme of Vaiṣṇaiva devotional passages in the *MBh* and in much of later Indian literature.

47.65. *all three times:* Past, present, and future.

47.72. *the cheers of the twice-born: giraḥ . . . dvijeritāḥ.* Though it seems likely that the word *dvija* means "brahmin" here, as it usually does in the *MBh* narrative, it is not certain that it does, so I have translated the word literally. Of course the precise sense of "the other people" in 72c depends upon which sense of *dvija* is understood; as I have translated this verse, the "other people" are the members of the śūdra *varṇa* and other, lower groups.

49.7. *the son of a brahmin seer: kaviputra.* I take *kavi* generically as seer, and not as the name of the Bhārgava seer Kavi, since according to *MBh* 1.60.40–48, Ṛcīka was the son of Aurva, who was son of Cyavana, who was son of Bhṛgu. Kavi was the son of Bhṛgu, and Kavi's son was Śukra.

49.14. *she was not unmindful of her husband's directions: bhartur vākyād atha-avyagrā.* Belvalkar has certainly chosen the most principled reading here, one which explicitly exonerates Satyavatī of blame for the mix-up. The popular north-central reading (*tathāvyagrā,* or even *tadāvyagrā,* in the Citraśala Press edition) leaves the issue ambiguous; but Nīlakaṇṭha and, later, Ganguli, say Satyavatī, in her excitement, was heedless of the directions ("*vyagrā harṣeṇaiva*": so Nīlakaṇṭha). The Pune text clearly charges only the mother with not keeping track of the two *carus. MBh* 13.4, which gives another account of this *varṇasaṃkara* (mixing of *varṇas*) lays the blame on the fickleness of Satyavatī's mother.

49.19. *absorbed in* brahman: I translate *brahmabhūta* here as I did at 12.12.24. But might the word here simply mean "(who is) a brahmin?"

49.21. *a disgrace to brahmins: brāhmaṇāpasada putra.* The word *apasada* comes to have a somewhat technical meaning in legal literature, a meaning approaching "degenerate," as

it is one of the terms used in those contexts to classify the offspring of sexual unions between parents of different *varnas*. But most of the time in the *MBh* the word signifies the idea that someone who is a member of some group behaves in a way that is below the standard of the group and brings dishonor upon the group, someone who is a "disgrace." The plea of this young woman not only uses the word in this more general sense, the author of this passage may intend to be provocatively ironic by using this word here. According to the legalistic standard of the Dharmaśāstra literature, the children of princess Satyavatī (bear in mind that she is the daughter of a king [Gādhi] who is Indra incarnate) and the brahmin Ṛcīka would be classified as one kind of *apasada* (perhaps the translation "degenerate half-breed" would not be too strong for this use of the term), namely, *anantaraja*, "born of a mother just one step down from the father." But her plea not only fails to reflect any sense on her part that her expected son would be degraded, it reflects the firm belief (expressed above at 12.49.11) that her husband's special potion was going to give her a son who would be an exemplary brahmin, "steadfast, ascetic, completely calm within, the most excellent of brahmins (*dvijaśreṣṭha*)." So, if the author of this passage was aware of the Dharmaśāstra use of the word (it is conceivable that he was not, though it seems likely to me he would have known), then by deliberately suggesting that Satyavatī's and Ṛcīka's offspring would have been an ideal brahmin were it not for this mix-up of the *carus*—that he will be *brāhmaṇāpasada* only because of that mix-up —he would seem to be making a point against this theme of Dharmaśāstra.

To some extent, at various points in the text, the *MBh* tries to distance itself from the violent Bhārgava, Rāma Jāmadagnya, whose bloody vendetta against kṣatriyas is narrated in this chapter at some length. One indication of the text's ambivalence toward Rāma is its argument that he is a *brāhmaṇāpasada* (that is one implication of Satyavatī's use of the term here) who came into existence as he did only through the mistaken application of a ritually charged substance, the *caru*. The way in which the particular telling of the story here concludes, with the castigation and banishment of Rāma, and Earth's preservation and nurture of some kṣatriyas in order to reinstitute kṣatriya kingship, is another instance of the *Mahābhārata*'s criticizing Rāma. For a comprehensive survey and discussion of Rāma Jāmadagnya in the *MBh*, see my "The Rāma Jāmadagnya Thread of the *Mahābhārata*."

49.50. *"Yayāti's Landing": Yayātipatana*, where Yayāti fell down from heaven. See *MBh* 1.81 ff., 3.87.8, and 5.119, which describe Yayāti's landing (on the ground) amidst his daughter Mādhavī's four sons (Vasumanas, Pratardana, Śibi, and Aṣṭaka; see *MBh* 5.112–20) as they performed a "Draft of Strength Sacrifice" (Vājapeya).

49.51. *You took to your mountain:* Presumably a reference to Rāma's mountain Mahendra near the ocean in eastern India.

49.56. *Kaśyapa:* See the entry on Kaśyapa in the LCP. The Sanskrit word *kaśyapa* also means "tortoise," and thus his name connects this seer to the various ways tortoises are regarded and represented in Indian folk beliefs and myths; see, for example, later accounts of the Turtle Incarnation of Viṣṇu.

49.59. *the Śūrpāraka country:* According to *MBh* 2.28 (van Buitenen, *Mahābhārata*, 2: 82–85; see ślokas 37–49 in particular), this territory lies to the southwest of Bharatavarṣa and is associated with island dwellers, barbarian peoples, and foreigners (including the city of Rome and the "city of the Greeks," which is presumably the city of Antioch, *"antākhī,"* which the editor of *The Book of the Assembly Hall*, Franklin Edgerton, reads at 2.28.49a by emendation). *MBh* 13.26.47 (spelling it Sūrpāraka) locates it somewhere near the Narmadā River. For some of the stories and legends regarding Rāma following his banishment to the west by Kaśyapa, see S. S. Janaki's "Paraśurāma," and Irawati Karve's "The Paraśurāma Myth."

49.67 ff. *a descendant of Pūru:* Three of the kṣatriyas named here, Pūru, Śibi, and Pratardana were descendants of Yayāti; Pūru was his youngest son, the one who traded his youth for his father's old age, and Śibi and Pratardana were the sons of Yayāti's daughter Mādhavī and, respectively, Auśīnara and Divodāsa (see *MBh* 5.112 ff. and see the note above at 49.50). And Sudās, mentioned indirectly in the next stanza, 49.68, ancient king of the Tṛtsus, was the son or grandson of Divodāsa, and thus the stepbrother, or stepnephew, of Pratardana, who, in the *Mahābhārata*, though not in the Vedas, succeeded his father Divodāsa as the king of the Kāśis.

50.4. *that such a Righteous deed was done by a brahmin: yatra karmedṛśaṃ dharmyaṃ dvijena kṛtam.* Is Yudhiṣṭhira referring here to Rāma? Or might it possibly be Kaśyapa he has in mind?

50.7. *that supremely Meritorious spot: deśe paramadharmiṣṭhe.*

50.26. *a ninth Vasu:* There are normally eight Vasus, and Indra is often their leader. This praise of Bhīṣma is an interesting deviation from an earlier statement in the *MBh* (see *MBh* 1.93, especially verses 36 ff.) that Bhīṣma is a human incarnation of the Vasu Dyaus (Father Sky). See also *MBh* 1.57.76.

50.33. *that one primordial Law: cāturvarṇyena yaś caiko dharmo na sma virudhyate / sevyamānaḥ sa caivādyo gāṅgeya viditas tava // 33.* I do not know what this "one primordial Law" is that Kṛṣṇa refers to here. Nīlakaṇṭha is no help, because his text reads quite differently. The reading of the text here is quite problematic.

51.0. This chapter has a number of verses in common with 12.47 above, Bhīṣma's "King of Lauds."

51.5 (1). *With that which you just described about me:* I believe what is meant by this phrase is "on the basis of that knowledge of mine that you just described." Bhīṣma here relates some features of Kṛṣṇa's being that are not obvious upon observation. They depend upon Bhīṣma's higher level of insight and knowledge, which is why he says "We see in our mind" at 8c; see the note there.

51.5 (2). *in the three strata:* See the note above at 12.47.58.

51.8. *we see in our mind: anumimīmaḥ.* The use of this verb (*anu-√mā*, which typically means "infer, conjecture" but has that meaning because it more generally means "to know or learn something in a less direct way [*anu-*] than through sense perception") with regard to Kṛṣṇa's blue body is somewhat puzzling. Does the text really mean to say that this aspect of Kṛṣṇa's appearance is known only with the superior eye of the devotee's mind? Regarding the color motif here, see the note above to 12.47.60.

51.14 *fifty-six days remain for you to live: pañcāśataṃ ṣaṭ ca kurupravīra śeṣaṃ dinānāṃ tava jīvitasya.* The text plainly reads (without any variants) "fifty-six days," so that is how I translate it. Some scholars, inappropriately imputing to the *Mahābhārata* the intentions of certain kinds of chroniclers, have spent a great deal of energy trying to reconcile this number with other direct and indirect indications of the sequence and duration of various events. (For a sketch of the dilemma, see Belvalkar's note to this verse in his critical notes to his edition of the *ŚP*. Belvalkar forces the number thirty-five out of "fifty-six.") In my judgment it is neither necessary nor possible to reconcile the details of the narrative in such ways.

51.17. *for the purpose of giving Law a careful examination: dharmavivecanāya.*

52.7. *mental clarity: pratibhā*, the inner light, or vision, of consciousness that manifests thoughts or ideas to one's intellect; and, more generally, intelligence, presence of mind, and imagination.

52.8. *The energy I have comes from consuming my mental resources: balaṃ medhāḥ prajarati;* literally, "My strength is digesting my mental faculties." Or *bala* may refer to the "intensity" of Bhīṣma's discomfort, in which case 52.8a should be understood to say, "The intense pain consumes my mental faculties."

52.20. *this fourfold throng of beings:* The usual four categories of beings are those born from wombs (literally amniotic sacs, *jarāyu-ja*), those born from eggs, those born from warm moisture, and those born from seeds.

54.1. *who was always mindful of Law:* The author reassures his audience that Bhīṣma was always heedful of Law because, as his name implies, some might doubt his virtue. His vow of celibacy was extremely risky and could be judged as an inappropriate action. See the LCP.

54.13. *my brother: tāta*, a word of affectionate address that basically means "father, dad," but which became more generalized and is used by seniors towards juniors as well as by juniors toward seniors. I have rendered the word with the affectionate, "my brother," since Yudhiṣṭhira and Kṛṣṇa are basically cousins of the same generation, and in spite of the eminence of Kṛṣṇa that has been in the foreground for the past several chapters, I do not think Yudhiṣṭhira looks upon Kṛṣṇa here as "father."

54.20. *different kinds of people: jāti-s*, "genera," or "species" of living beings; the actual endogamous "caste" groups of the caste system. Sometimes referred to as "subcastes," because many such *jātis* are contained within each of the four social Orders (*varṇas*) of brahminic thought and myth.

54.25. *All ideas true and false: bhāvāḥ sadasadātmakāḥ.* The word *asad* refers to what exists only ephemerally or partially.

54.35c. Text Amendment: *Laws for mankind:* Read *manudharmāṇām* for *anudharmāṇām*. The word *anudharma* is not implausible (especially as there seems to be some predilection for the prefix *anu* in this chapter), but it is otherwise unknown in Sanskrit literature, and is known here only in one quite derivative manuscript. On the other hand *manudharmāṇām* is shared by the better Kaśmīrī manuscripts and those from Kerala, along with the others from the South as well. The majority of the northern manuscripts revised the unusual *manudharmāṇām* to the more ordinary *sarvadharmāṇām*, because, I suspect, they wished to avoid the likelihood that *manudharma* might be understood as the dharmas of Manu.

55.7. *he would never do anything against Law out of craving, anger, fear, or expediency: yo na . . . kuryād adharmam.* Bhīṣma seems to have no knowledge of Yudhiṣṭhira's violation of *satya* in connection with Droṇa's death. It seems highly unlikely that Bhīṣma could be ironic in this setting.

12(84) The Laws for Kings

Part 2: Bhīṣma's Instructions on the Laws for Kings

56.14. *extrahuman help: daiva,* often translated as "fate," but sometimes that is too specialized. See the note above to 11.1.19, which cites Arjunamiśra's comment to this passage.

56.30. *he does not incur the sin of slaying a brahmin:* See the note above to 12.15.55. This stanza would appear to justify the (severe) punishment of brahmins.

56.35. *the six kinds of "fortress":* Nīlakaṇṭha gives a list of six kinds of fortified cities (*durga-s*) here: Those fortified by "desert, water, earth, forest, mountains, and people." See below at 12.87.5. The *AŚ*, at 2.3.1 directs the king to build desert, water, forest, and mountain forts.

56.36. *The king . . . delights his subjects:* There is a play on the Sanskrit words here: *rājā rañjayati prajāḥ.*

57.1. Text Amendment: Read *praśasyate na* for *praśāmyate ca*. Given the weakness of attestation of *praśāmyate*, it seems more likely that *praśāmyate* is an isolated, tendentious improvement of *praśasyate* than that *praśasyate* is an almost universal revision of *praśāmyate*.

57.8. For a slightly fuller version of the story of Asamañjas in the *MBh*, see 3.106.9–16, van Buitenen, 3: 426–27.

57.10. *who treated brahmins improperly:* The incident referred to here is not otherwise known in the *MBh*. But, expressing a theme known widely in the *MBh*, Śvetaketu was famous as an upstart boy, challenging his father and other authority frequently. He successfully insisted that the rule proscribing honey for students of the Veda be eliminated (see *ŚB* 11.5.4.18). He challenged his father's idealistic attitude on performing rituals (see *Śāṅkhāyana Śrautasūtra* 16.27.6 ff.). He challenged his father Uddālaka's acquiescence to the custom of women (in this case his mother) having sexual freedom, and he laid down the law that women must be faithful to their husbands (see *MBh* 1.113.9–20). This incident must be born in mind with other passages involving Śvetaketu, Uddālaka, and the issue of fatherhood. See *MBh* 12.35.22, which implies that Śvetaketu was born as Uddālaka's son after Uddālaka had given his wife to one of his students, and 3.132.16, where Śvetaketu disabuses Aṣṭāvakra of the belief that Uddālaka was his, Aṣṭāvakra's, father. This story, in which Uddālaka once again gives away a woman for procreative purposes (this time he gives his daughter to one of his pupils, and Aṣṭāvakra is the issue) centers upon relations between fathers and sons: While still in his mother's womb Aṣṭāvakra criticized his father's lack of wit; as his own father had lost his life at court, Aṣṭāvakra grew up thinking Uddālaka was his father, until Śvetaketu jealously informed him otherwise; Aṣṭāvakra then went to Janaka's court, defeated the sage who had defeated his father, and caused his father to be revived.

57.16. *the six measures of foreign policy: ṣāḍguṇya.* According to Manu 7.160 the six measures are *saṃdhi, vigraha, yāna, āsana, dvaidhībhāva,* and *saṃśraya*—(1) alliance, or concluding a treaty, or peace; (2) war; (3) marching; (4) sitting in place; (5) dividing the army in two; and (6) reliance on allies. Nīlakaṇṭha explains this set of six measures this way: "Negotiating a treaty when one is marching against a stationary enemy who is stronger [*saṃdhi*]; war, [*vigraha*] when he is of equal strength; marching against an enemy who is weaker and attacking his fortified city, etc. [*yāna*]; likewise, when one is stationary and the enemy attacking is stronger, staying in one's fortified city, etc., and defending oneself [*āsana*]; when the enemy is middling he should do both with his army [*dvaidhībhāva*]—staying in his fortified city with half the army and interfering with his enemy's crops, etc. with the other half of the army; when the enemy is weaker he counts on his allies [*samāśraya*]; he should rely upon his enemy's neighbor as his own ally and make war with his enemy." See Hartmut Scharfe, *The State in Indian Tradition,* 202–8.

57.18. *the group of ten:* Nīlakaṇṭha says the ten are "the set of five elements—counselors, country, fortified city, treasury, and army—on his side and on his enemy's." The same group of five is given at Manu 7.157 and 9.294, and at *AŚ* 6.1.1; these are five of the seven basic constituents (*prakṛtis*) of a kingdom. The other two are, first, the king himself, and, last, his ally (or allies).

57.32. Technical Note: *The king who shows that he accepts responsibility for projects begun but not yet completed: ārabdhāny eva kāryāṇi na paryavasitāni ca / yasya rajñaḥ pradṛśyante.* I have transformed the passive verb and the complementary genitive into an active sentence. The subject of the passive verb in the Sanskrit (*pradṛśyante* "is seen [to be]") is *ārabdhāni* ("projects begun") and *kāryāṇi* (a gerundive designating something as an obligation or duty) is a predicate adjective complemented by the genitive phrase.

57.40. *This stanza . . . : ślokaś cāyaṃ purā gīto bhārgaveṇa mahātmanā / ākhyāte rāmacarite nṛpatiṃ prati bhārata.* My translation here supplies a good deal not explicitly given in the text, but which I believe is implicit in it. The alternative, straightforwardly literal reading of the stanza produces the following puzzling and inconsistent sentence: "This stanza concerning kings was sung long ago by the exalted Bhārgava when the account of Rāma's life was explained." The only previous instance I have found in the *MBh* of any part of the quoted stanza is 41ab at 1.148.12ab (12.57.41cd occurs at *1630-1 in the Pune edition of the *Ādiparvan*, being found in a few Grantha mss.).

58.10. *both kinds of punishment:* Corporal punishment and fines, according to Nīlakaṇṭha.

58.19–20. *When the king says things in secret . . . :* Two rather difficult stanzas, but the general idea seems clear enough. As Nīlakaṇṭha and Belvalkar say, Bhīṣma here concedes that the king must sometimes behave unethically, and this behavior is then covered by his general rectitude.

58.22. *the whole pretty piece of it: sarvāmiṣam;* this word may also be used to signify any coveted or prized object (see *MBh* 11.4.6 and 11.19.4). Yudhiṣṭhira used it when he rejected the kingship of the Bharatas (see 12.7.8, 10).

59.5. *this word "king" that goes around: ya eṣa rājā rājeti śabdaś carati.* The repetition of *rājā* denotes the constant use of the word, as Belvalkar points out, referring to Pāṇini 8.1.4.

59.18. *desire ended up their main concern: kāmo nāmāparas tatra samapadyata;* literally, "(For them) desire grew to be something higher than which [or, beyond which] there was nothing."

59.32. *and there is also one's goal: kṛtyam eva ca.* There are seven items listed here, though the text says there are only six. The best way that occurs to me to separate one item from the other six is to invoke the distinction between ends and means, between goals (the *kṛtya*) and various things relevant to realizing goals. Nīlakaṇṭha and Belvalkar resolve the problem by taking the word *kāraṇa,* which I render as "performing the deed," as a name for the whole set of items specified by the six terms other than *kāraṇa*. Exactly what they understand by *kāraṇa* then is not clear, as they do not gloss it.

59.33 (1). *The three Vedas, intellectual analysis, economic productivity, and the policy for using the rod of force:* The same four terms occur at the head of Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra,* with which this chapter has a number of close resemblances; see *AŚ* 1.2.1.

59.33 (2). *the rod of force: daṇḍa,* a word that refers both to a king's army and his inflicting punishment on wrongdoers. "Violence" is sometimes a good translation. See the note to 12.15.9.

59.34. *Setting a watch to protect oneself against one's ministers: amātyarakṣāpraṇidhiḥ.* In this context *praṇidhi* means basically "the commissioning (of spies)." In the second half of this verse, where *praṇidhi* is mentioned in parallel with a commonplace term for spy (*cāra*, used here collectively for "spies"), I translate the same word more generally with "intelligence gathering." In this second verse of the stanza, my phrase "distinctive kind of intelligence gathering" is a literal rendition of the text's *pṛthagvidha*, which stands opposed to the *cāraś ca vividhopāyaḥ*, but I have no idea what this *pṛthagvidha praṇidhi* might actually be.

59.39 (1). *conquest that is demonic: āsuraś caiva vijayaḥ*, conquest pursued from motives other than dharma and artha. Nīlakaṇṭha cites Aśvatthāman's night raid as an example of a conquest, or victory, that is "demonic."

59.39 (2). *the group of five:* According to Nīlakaṇṭha, this group of five elements is the same as that involved in 12.57.18 above; see the note there.

59.43. *the neutral king: udāsīna.* See the note below at 12.59.70 for the context that defines this neutral, or indifferent, king (who is quite distinct from the king who is caught in the middle, who is called literally "the one in the middle," *madhyama*, between a warring king and his enemy). The *udāsīna* king is "aloof" and "removed," while the *madhyama* king is proximate to both parties without being an ally of either.

59.44. *refreshing oneself: āśvāsa.* The idea is not completely clear. The root idea in the word is "breathe again; recover breath," and causatively strengthened forms, such as this noun, are frequently used in clearly transitive ways that signify "encouraging, heartening, reassuring" some other person. Here it might mean simply "relaxation" or "re-creation" of oneself. Nīlakaṇṭha is silent, and Ganguli fails to translate the word. The word occurs one time in the *AŚ*, at 10.4.13, where the context is one of managing troops, and Kangle renders it "comforting" (troops). It is interesting that the term is unknown in Manu and otherwise unknown in Kauṭilya.

59.46. *the science of quenching the blades of weapons: pāyanajñāna*, "making weapons drink," a reference to the quenching process in the fabrication of iron weapons (actually, the metal of the worked edge was normally a low-carbon steel effected in practice through trial and error). See the note on the hardening of iron blades at 12.99.17 and my paper, "Sanskrit *pīta* and *śaikya/saikya:* Two Terms of Iron and Steel Technology in the *Mahābhārata.*"

59.47. *calamities of armies: balavyasana.* See *AŚ* 8.5 for a list of these—it lists such problems as the army's being unpaid, exhausted, cut off from supplies, and so forth.

59.61. *masochism, suicide: ātmano nigrahas tyāgaḥ.* The phrase *ātmano nigrahaḥ* is literally "punishment or chastisement of oneself," or of one's body. I think Belvalkar is right to gloss *tyāga*, "abandonment," as "suicide."

59.63. *Fanning out: apaskara*, "scattering" (from √*kṝ* with *apa-*), which Belvalkar plausibly suggests would be for the purposes of foraging and gathering intelligence; according to Belvalkar, whom I follow, stanza 64 lists six items that might be gathered.

59.64. *the procuring of cymbals . . . :* Belvalkar suggests that an enemy army might confiscate these musical instruments because they could be used "to communicate news and spread alarms." There may be some truth to this suggestion, but these items, especially the metal used for making some of them, could well be of use to an invading army.

59.66. *brahminic piety: āstikyam.* Perhaps "creed" would not be inappropriate as a rendering of the abstract suffix *-ya* here.

59.70. *the twelve kings that stand in the alliances: maṇḍalasthā . . . dvādaśarājikā.* According to Kauṭilya at *AŚ* 6.2.24–28, there are four natural stances in relations among kings (Manu 7.155 says the same, less explicitly). There is the "protagonist king" (the *vijigīṣu*, "the king seeking conquest"); his enemy (the *ari*); the king whose realm adjoins both of theirs (the *madhyama*, "the one in the middle"); and the king who has nothing to do with either of them (the *udāsīna*, "he who is indifferent"). Each of these four parties is conceived of as the focus of an "association," a "circle" (*maṇḍala*) centered on himself (Manu at 7.156 calls each the base or root, *mūla*, of a *maṇḍala*). Thus there are naturally four *maṇḍalas*, each made up, in principle, of the central king, his principal ally, and the ally's ally.

The term *maṇḍala*, which concretely means "disk" or "circle," seems generally to be used in these contexts in the rather abstract sense of "a group, a herd; a collectivity, an association, an alliance; a set." On the other hand, some presentations of the relations between kings use obvious spatial themes—states that are contiguous are rivals (see *AŚ* 6.2.14, 16, 19); states separated by one intervening state are natural allies of each other against their common contiguous enemy (see Kauṭilya 6.2.15, 18, 20); the degree of proximity of two states conditions fundamentally the quality of their relations (see Kauṭilya 6.2.18–22); an active king relates to states that lie "in front of him" differently from the way he relates to those "behind him" (see Kauṭilya 6.2.18)—and thus the term *maṇḍala* is sometimes used with at least overtones of the geometric or spatial sense of "disk," "circle," or "wheel." For example, at 6.2.39 Kauṭilya quotes a verse likening the relationship between the *vijigīṣu*, his allies, and the allies of his allies to a wheel of which the *vijigīṣu* is the nave, his indirect allies the rim, and his direct allies the spokes. And when Kauṭilya defines "the enemy" at *AŚ* 6.2.14—immediately after defining the protagonist, the *vijigīṣu* ("EGO" in Hartmut Scharfe's discussion; see Scharfe, *State in Indian Tradition*, 202–8)—he says, "The 'policy-element' [*prakṛti*] that is 'the enemy' for him [the *vijigīṣu*] are (those kings with realms) immediately adjacent to his who form a circle around him on every side." (It is possible that even in this sentence the word *maṇḍala* does not mean simply, perhaps not even primarily, a geometric circle or disk.) Kauṭilya goes on to define the *vijigīṣu*'s ally next, at *AŚ* 6.2.15, and many scholars, including Scharfe (see Hartmut Scharfe, *Untersuchungen zur Staatsrechtslehre des Kauṭalya*, 124) have, not unreasonably, construed Kauṭilya as saying that the *vijigīṣu*'s primary allies occur in a circle that surrounds the disk of the *vijigīṣu*'s enemies. They construe him as saying further that there are more concentric rings of enemies' enemies, allies' allies, and so forth. Nīlakaṇṭha glosses the idea of *maṇḍalasthā* . . . in just this way in his comment here to *MBh* 12.59.70.

But *AŚ* 6.2.15 need not be taken quite so concretely, in such literally spatial terms. Also, throughout the rest of Chapter 6.2, Kauṭilya describes the relations between states in ways that are incompatible with a theory of alternating rings of enemies and allies with the *vijigīṣu* at the center. And finally, with the exception of 6.2.39, already noted, the word *maṇḍala* is used throughout this chapter in the more abstract ways noted above. At 6.2.28 the word is even used to refer to the entire collectivity of twelve kings and their twelve countries, treasuries, fortified cities, ministerial complements, and armies. The whole set of these seventy-two constituent elements of interstate policy is a "*maṇḍala.*"

59.71. *the theory of the seventy-two (constituent elements regulating policy between kingdoms): dvāsaptatimatiḥ.* I interpret this after *AŚ* 6.2.28 (to which, again, Manu 7.157 conforms, thought it is less explicit), where Kauṭilya, just having defined the four *rājamaṇḍalas*, says that each *maṇḍala* includes, besides the three kings themselves, each king's "ministers, country, fortified city, treasury, and army." Each king and kingdom thus presents six elements that come into play in determining policy. Thus each *maṇḍala* embraces, in principle, eighteen elements; and so there are seventy-two elements in the four *maṇḍalas*. These constituents are simply the seven basic constituent elements of a kingdom transposed into the *maṇḍala* theme: The king himself; the "group of five (elements)" (*pañcavarga*), namely, minister(s), country, fortified city, army, and treasury; and finally the element of ally, of which there are two in the basic *maṇḍala*. See *AŚ* 6.1.1 and Manu 9.294. These four eighteenfold *rājamaṇḍalas* can be, and are by Kauṭilya, regarded as all included in a higher-order *maṇḍala* of the seventy-two elements, the *prakṛtimaṇḍala;* see *AŚ* 7.1.1.

59.73. *rites that strike at another's base: mūlakarma-.* What these are is not known, but there are mentions of such rites at Manu 9.290 and 11.64, and at *AŚ* 4.4.14. These parallel passages mention other kinds of harmful rites, such as *abhicāra* and *kṛtyā-s*, but none of them make clear the exact sense of *mūla* that is appropriate. BR takes *mūla* to be vegetable roots ("magical rites done with roots"), but two passages in the *MBh* persuade me that we are dealing with a more abstract sense of "root" here, specifically 12.119.16 and 3.240.3, which describe a ritual action of Duryodhana's as "*mūlaghātin.*" We have a similar context of malevolent aggression here, one which is continued in the final measure of this śloka when it refers to injuring one's neighbor or enemy by ruining his streams and tanks, and 73b refers to "ploys making use of illusion" (*māyāyoga-s*).

59.73b. Text Reading Note: *ploys making use of illusion:* Read the text of the critical edition as *māyāyogaḥ* instead of *māyā yogaḥ.*

59.94. *Virajas:* Certainly related somehow to the obscure figure Virāj, who is mentioned in

some creation accounts (such as that in *RV* 10.90 and in the cosmogony of Manu [1.32–33]) as one of the first offspring of, or emanations from, the primal being or reality. See Bhattacharji, *Indian Theogony*, 329–30, for other suggestions. Virajas could be taken to mean "the Clean One," or he who is "Free of *rajas*," a vague substance which sullies and empassions a person's soul or mind. The word *rajas* also signifies "menstrual blood," and it is conceivable the term here might also imply "not born of woman." That suggestion is speculative, but see Nārada's highly disparaging remarks on normal human gestation and birth at *MBh* 12.318.14 and 20–26, which are, with some similarities to the current passage, intended to dissuade Vyāsa's son Śuka from marrying and becoming a parent and householder (the broader point on the surface of that text is to champion renunciation as a viable religious choice not requiring the step-by-step progression through the four *āśramas* favored by Manu and much of the *MBh*). It is similarly pertinent that Śuka's "mother" was the lower piece of wood used to drill fire for the sacrifice (his father Vyāsa had ejaculated involuntarily while drilling for fire). But the fact that Viṣṇu produced a son to be a king and Vyāsa produced a son providing a yogic counterexample to householding distinguishes these two instances from each other. Finally, with significant connections to the senses of the word already mentioned, the term *rajas* is used in many important quarters of thought (often referred to generally under the name Sāṃkhya, but that name is too specific) to designate "Energy," the active principle that is one of the three constituent Attributes (*guṇa-s*) of Nature (*prakṛti*).

59.104. *a man who looked like another Indra:* This is Vainya ("son of Vena"), Pṛthu, though he is not called by this latter name in this story. See *MBh* 12.29.129.

59.109. *Do without hesitation whatever is Law, having restrained yourself: niyato yatra dharmo vai tam aśaṅkaḥ samācara.* The word *niyata* does not modify dharma. In the *MBh*, *niyata*, when applying to persons, almost always refers to one kind of personal self-restraint or another. This ethical theme is highly relevant here in light of the failings alleged for Atibala and Vena, and the next stanza spells out some of the ways Vena's son should restrain himself as he rules.

59.114. *the complete blending together of different kinds of people: saṃkarāt kṛtsnāt.* The *saṃkara* of the world (*loka*) is both a matter of preserving the distinctive work of people (most importantly, the unique ritual and teaching authority, and thus economic livelihood, of brahmins) and the proper *varṇa* natures of people. Besides other fears such mixture may occasion, one of the primary effects of general mixture, or "confusion," would be to efface the distinctive nature and position, and so ultimately the very existence, of brahmins as a distinct element of society.

59.141. *All this . . . :* Bhīṣma brings to a close his discourse on *rājadharmas*. In response to his question "What more?" Yudhiṣṭhira asks, at 60.1, about *varṇadharma* and *āśramadharma*.

60.14. *barbarians: dasyu-s.*

60.25. *A seventh part:* In the absence of any better authority, I follow Nīlakaṇṭha in setting down a seventh part of seed-grain rather than a sixteenth part. Both are possible grammatically.

60.29. *The śūdra should never, ever, accumulate anything:* See Manu 10.129.

60.32. *as [parasols, etc.] wear out: yātayamānāni*, in a sense previously unattested in the Indian lexicographical tradition and confirmed here by Nīlakaṇṭha.

60.36–52. *The sacrificial rites of worship carried out with the Triple Learning . . . :* The passage beginning here and extending to the end of the chapter is remarkable, interesting, and important. Unfortunately, many of its details cannot be construed with certainty. I have spent a great deal of time juggling competing interpretations of various words and sentences, and the translation given here, and explained without much discussion in the ensuing notes, is the best I can do with it for now. The highly learned and thoughtful editor of the Pune text, Professor S. K. Belvalkar, has copious notes on this passage in his critical notes to his edition of the *The Laws for Kings;* I have, of course, consulted them carefully and benefited from them greatly, even where I disagree with his interpretations. I want to mention also that I discussed many points in this passage in private correspondence in 1996 with Professor Yasuke Ikari of Kyoto, whose objections to my initial draft translation brought home forcefully the fundamental indeterminacy of much of the language here.

As I read the passage, it is concerned fundamentally with the economic issue of śūdras offering *dakṣiṇā-s* to brahmins for "sacrifices" (*yajñas*), though śūdras are supposedly barred from sacrificial worship (*yajñas* have the recitation of the Vedas' *ṛc* verses, *yajus* formulas, and *sāman* songs at their core, and some elements of the brahmin tradition vigorously insisted that śūdras should never even hear these recited). The passage involves an expansion and attenuation of the notion of *yajña* similar to that involved in the five "great, or general, sacrifices," the *mahāyajñas* at Manu 3.67–74. This passage, which has been partly effaced in much of the north Indian manuscript tradition, argues that śūdras can perform a much attenuated version of the sacrifice that does not require the actual, physical services of brahmin priests nor brahmin priests' recitation of the Vedas (śūdras may use the ritual exclamations "Svāhā" and "namas" ["Adoration to . . .", or "I adore . . ."] as their "mantras"). But, the text argues, in 41 and 45, that all sacrifices, including such attenuated sacrifices by śūdras, are ultimately efficacious because of the mediation of brahmins, and so śūdras should offer *dakṣiṇās* to brahmins for this general mediation. The essence of the *yajña* is threefold: First it is the "Trusting Surrender" and "Enthusiastic Munificence" (*śraddhā*, which is often rendered inadequately as "faith"; see Köhler, *Śrad-dhā*) on the part of the worshiper; second, it is the worshiper's "basic intention" (*manīṣā* in 43a, which is accurately glossed by Belvalkar as "a godward aspiration in faith"); and third, the fact that whatever is "sent forth" (*sṛṣṭa* by worshipers, is "sent completely," "finally and fully sent" (*saṃsṛṣṭa*) by the brahmins (note my amendment of the text in 60.44d).

One of the sensitive issues here is the proscription of brahmins' officiating at the rites of people deemed unworthy; śūdras are generally deemed unworthy as a simple fact of nature. This passage attempts to have things both ways; śūdras do perform the *yajña*, but not with the physical ministrations of brahmins. Brahmins can and should receive *dakṣiṇā* as a result of śūdra *yajñas*, but they need not officiate physically. All of this is specially relevant, of course, because brahmins, their traditions, and their way of life were often threatened with extinction because, it seems (see for example Manu 3.65–66), they had too few "worthy" clients for their spiritual expertise.

60.36 (1). *"The sacrificial rites of worship carried out with the Triple Learning have been prescribed for the three Orders": uktas trayāṇāṃ varṇānāṃ yajñas trayyaiva bhārata.*

60.36 (2). *"Svāhā" and "namas" are the ritual formulas ordained for śūdras: svāhākāranamaskārau mantraḥ śūdre vidhīyate.*

60.37 (1). *Using these two formulas a śūdra who is observant of pious practices might perform worship for himself with the cooking offerings: tābhyāṃ śūdraḥ pākayajñair yajeta vratavān svayam.* The constituted text here is based on the agreement of the Northwestern (Kaśmīrī) manuscripts and the Southern tradition, and it deviates very significantly from the central North Indian tradition. I take the text to mean that śūdras, not included among the *varṇas* authorized to use the Vedas (36cd seems to have as one of its implications the usual exclusion of śūdras from the Vedas) may use the two ritual interjections in place of Vedic mantras. Thus, this passage, which the central and eastern North Indian manuscript traditions effaced in part, allows śūdras a limited, but real, form of sacrificial worship (*yajña*). Belvalkar reads the text differently and much more concretely than I do, seeing it as sanctioning full participation of śūdras in rituals with genuine Vedic mantras. In his critical note to this passage, on page 660 of the edition, he writes, "The constituted text . . . declares that the *trayī* ["the Triple Learning," the three Vedas other than the *Atharva Veda*] has plainly stated what the Varṇas have to do, allowing Śūdra the use of Svāhā, namas, and *mantra*, as also the right, with the help of the first two (*tābhyām*), to perform, with a formal *dīkṣā* [the formal consecration for the sacred ritual of the man undertaking a Soma sacrifice; it consists of various "observances" or "vows," *vratas*], what are known as the *pākayajñas* [the "cooking offerings"]." Belvalkar's interpretation is certainly plausible grammatically, but there is no compulsion to construe the text as sanctioning the use of Vedic mantras by śūdras, and it seems highly unlikely to me that that is what was intended.

The "cooking offerings" seem to have been four of the five "great, or general, sacrificial rites" that, according to Manu 3.67–70, householders were to offer every day: Food for the ancestors, food for the Gods, food for the birds and beasts (or "goblins," *bhūtas*), and food for other people (guests) that is cooked on one's household fire; so, anyway, Kullūka to Manu 2.86 (see the note of the translator Julius Jolly to *ViṣS* 55.20).

60.37 (2). *They say the present for a priest for this cooked sacrificial offering is a pot full of rice: pūrṇapātramayīm ahuḥ pākayajñasya dakṣiṇām.* According to Shree Radhakrishna Bhat, a Sanskrit scholar with whom I discussed this passage in Mysore in 1988, a *dakṣiṇā* would be given to one's *guru* whether he actually performs as a priest or not. So, yes, the śūdra can perform the ritual for himself (*yajeta . . . svayam*) and offer a *dakṣiṇā* to a brahmin. Of course

by the strictest standards a proper brahmin would not preside in this way over such rites, but the *MBh* informs us quite frequently, both directly and indirectly, that there were many "improper brahmins" who did not abide by the strictest standards. The theme of *āpaddharma*, "Law in times of distress," deals with such lapses. At some point in time, it seems, this theme came to be seen as an appendix to the idea of *rājadharma*. Lapses such as these, of course, are nothing new in the history of religious institutions, though those who articulate the ideals often feel them to be a great embarrassment.

60.38 (1). *a śūdra named Paijavana:* The śūdra Paijavana is otherwise unknown in Sanskrit literature. Paijavana, however, is a patronymic of the ancient king Sudās. See the note above at 11.24.1.

60.38 (2). *the Indra-Agni Rule:* What exactly the "Indra-Agni Rule" might be is hard to say. Ganguli, basically following a vague statement of Nīlakaṇṭha, says in a note, "This ordinance lays down that the *Dakshina* should be a hundred thousand animals such as kine or horses. In the case of this particular Sudra, that ordinance . . . was followed, and a hundred thousand *Purnapatras* [containers of rice] were substituted for kine or horses of that number." The adjective "Indra-Agni" usually refers to a particular ritual offering or draft, or to the *Yajur Veda* formula at *VS* 3.13; see Renou, *Vocabulaire*, s.v. "*Aindrāgnagraha*," and *ŚB* 2.3.4.12. The only other time this term occurs in the *MBh* (in 5.16.32) it refers to a sacrificial offering which Indra and Agni will share (symbolizing their cooperation in restoring Indra to power). There it is symbolically significant of Indra's return to power after he had fled and hid for having killed the brahmin Viśvarūpa and having killed Vṛtra by treachery. This particular episode is recounted in *ŚB* 1.6.3–4, and an "Indra-Agni" rice-cake is described at *ŚB* 1.6.4.3.

60.39 (1). *Trusting Surrender: śraddhā.* See the notes above for 12.28.41, 12.36.42 (and 12.10.19).

60.39 (2). *it is a purifier of those who offer sacrificial worship: pavitraṃ yajatām.* A *pavitra* is something that "cleanses, purifies, rectifies" something or someone that is or may be "tainted" or otherwise unsuitable for a holy purpose. It does so by some form of contact. Water, different kinds of grasses, and particular mantras are three of the most common types of ritual purifiers in the brahminic tradition. Here, interestingly, it is a particular state of mind that renders śūdras fit as they offer worship.

60.40. *with everlasting communal sacrificial sessions: sattraiḥ . . . sanātanaiḥ.* A *sattra* is a sacrificial rite with Soma that goes on for extended periods of time (sometimes days, sometimes years), and in which the participating brahmin priests are all consecrated as co-sacrificers (*yajamāna-s*). That is, they are conducting the rite for their own ends, rather than serving the ends of a client.

60.41. *Any offerings made among the three Orders: triṣu varṇeṣu sṛṣṭayaḥ.* The interpretation of the word *sṛṣṭi* here is perhaps the single most difficult problem in this passage. Fundamentally a *sṛṣṭi* is a "jet, an emission" a movement, often a sudden or quick movement, of something away from a source. This notion is the fundamental idea of brahminic cosmogonies in Sanskrit literature: What comes into being is an emission, with subsequent diffusion, of a stream of derivative being(s) from a formerly simple source. (It is later formulated as the "Theory that the Product [or the effect] Exists Already in its Source [or its (material) cause], the *satkāryavāda*.) The idea is often rendered with "creation," which is obviously an unhappy compromise. Nīlakaṇṭha, followed by Ganguli, understands the word to mean the biological issue of the brahmins: The three non-brahmin *varṇas* were historically the degraded issue of brahmins and thus they all, even śūdras, may perform *yajñas*. Though this interpretation is not an implausible interpretation of 41ab, it does not fit into the rest of the stanza, which asserts that the *sṛṣṭis*, and the sacrifices (that occur) among the (other) three *varṇas* are *saṃsṛṣṭa*, "commingled, blended, fused" by the brahmins in some necessary, involuntary (*na kāmyayā*), way. Belvalkar sees the *sṛṣṭis* as the naturally occurring (*na kāmyayā*) diversification of ritual forms among the *varṇas* ("*kāryaprapañca*"), as the result over time of brahmins officiating at their own rites and at those of these various peoples. This is a plausible interpretation of 41b, but it does not adequately deal with the word *saṃsṛṣṭa* in 41a and that word's cognate in 41f. I take the word *sṛṣṭi* not in any of its "creation" senses, but rather as "releasing, discharging, giving (up), offering," and take it simply to mean the offerings, the sacrifices, the *tyāgas* ("lettings go, relinquishings") at the heart of all the *yajñas* of all the *varṇas*. As 43ab says, all

the *varṇas* offer *yajñas;* all of these "offerings up," *sṛṣṭis*, are fused together in the fundamental worship that has been carried on by *brāhmaṇa* men from time immemorial (41ab, ef; 40).

60.42. *(The brahmin who knows . . .): ṛgyajuḥsāmavit pūjyo nityaṃ syād devavad dvijaḥ / anṛgyajur asāmā tu prājāpatya upadravaḥ.* A very ambiguous stanza praising knowledge of the three Vedas in very exalted terms and scathingly condemning not knowing the Vedas. It effectively praises those brahmins who know one of the Vedas as "to be honored, or worshiped, like Gods." Someone, though it is not obvious who, is labeled "an outrage to the Creator," or "an outrage, or disaster, of the Creator's." I think the entire verse applies to the ideal twice-born people (*dvijas*), namely, brahmins, but it is not impossible to construe the stanza as referring to the three upper *varṇas* on the one hand and to the śūdras on the other. I take this stanza to be, like 41cd, a somewhat extraneous remark, one intended to justify the particular privileges of brahmins, in part by distinguishing vigorously between those who deserve the support and those who do not.

60.43 (1). *in intention: manīṣayā.* The essence of the *yajña* consists of the "giving up" (*tyāga, sṛṣṭi*), which is akin to *śraddhā*.

60.43 (2). *anyone who militates against sacrificial worship: nāsya yajñahano devā īhante.* That would be anyone who would limit the scope or extent of the *yajña*, particularly someone who would mount arguments against the idea taught here that śūdras do perform some kind of *yajña*.

60.44 (1). Text Amendment: Read *sṛṣṭaḥ* for *dṛṣṭaḥ* in pāda d. This reading is very well attested and parallels the point developed in anuṣṭubhs at 41b. I believe the Northwestern manuscripts altered *sṛṣṭaḥ* to *dṛṣṭaḥ* because the sense of *sṛṣṭaḥ*, "offered, given up," was overlooked. The Northwestern reading, which Belvalkar accepted for the Pune edition, might be construed as follows: "Anything that is seen among the three (lower) Orders of society was created by the brahmins." Or it might be taken as Belvalkar suggested, rendering 44c and d both: " 'That is a very great religion that we would all relish—that one which is seen established by the Brahmin amongst all the three Varṇas.' "

60.44 (2). *The brahmins would worship their own deity . . . :* These two triṣṭubhs might well represent the original statement of this argument, with the anuṣṭubhs being a later expansion of them.

60.44 (3). *What is offered among any of the three Orders: triṣu varṇeṣu sṛṣṭaḥ* (see the note just above regarding the reading).

60.45 (1). *obviously: 'niścayaḥ;* a somewhat unusual way to interpret this word. I take it as an adjective modifying *vipra* and meaning "without ascertainment," that is, without any need for a special effort to arrive at a *niścaya*. The word *niścaya* is not used this way normally in the *MBh*, but the style of these triṣṭubhs sets them apart generally.

60.45 (2). *"the brahmin is seen obviously to be one too": vipraś caiko 'niścayas teṣu dṛṣṭaḥ.* I take the burden of this point to be that all brahmins (who know the Veda, according to 42), regardless of any contingent variations in the way they serve as brahmins, are part of a single essence of brahmin ritual mediation.

60.47. *Trusting Surrender is the universal agency: śraddhā vai kāraṇaṃ mahat.* The word *mahat* functions here, as elsewhere, in the sense of "extending to all instances, common to all in a set, embracing all, general."

60.48. *The earlier form is "what was spilled"; its later form is the restored, "unspilled," offering: yat skannam asya tat pūrvaṃ yad askannaṃ tad uttaram.* Ritual offerings that have been tainted by spilling can be restored to the status of "unspilled" (*askanna*) by being blessed with a mantra (see *ŚB* 13.1.3.1, 3–5). These *gāthās* of Vaikhānasas ("who favored the offering of sacrificial worship") which, in 47, elevate the performer's state of mind over the external element of the exact time the Agnihotra is to be performed, praise later or subsequent forms of the *yajña* over earlier or prior ones. Obviously this juxtaposition is open to different interpretations; but the sense that seems closest to the current context would see the later (whole, sound, "unspilled") offering as a reference to the sacrificial offerings of the brahmins, which synthesize and "perfect" all prior offerings, imperfect as they might be. Nīlakaṇṭha and Belvalkar think otherwise.

61.6. *These marks of the sages who are celibate may be effected by a wise seer from the very outset,*

king: etāny nimittāni munīnām ūrdhvaretasām / kartavyānīha viprena rājann ādau vipaścitā. This stanza and the three following describe a way of life focused on *mokṣa*, the life of renunciation, for exceptional boys who bypass householding altogether. Allowing this possibility, of course, is at odds with what becomes the standard norm of the four *āśramas*, namely, that one proceed through them in due order. The "Story of Śuka," which is told in two subtexts of the *The Laws for Gaining Absolute Freedom* across Chapters 12.310–20, is an interesting, narratively represented discussion of this option that argues its fundamental correctness. See Olivelle, *Āśrama System*, pt. 3.1, 73–83, and his article "The Notion of Āśrama" for a discussion of the complexities that preceded the formulation of the system of the four *āśramas*.

61.19. Text Reading Note: Read *tathāvedaṃ* for *tathā vedaṃ*.

62.1. *Tell me the Lawful, Meritorious Deeds that are soothing, pleasant, bring great results, . . . :* Given the answer Bhīṣma makes to this question, we are to infer that Yudhiṣṭhira intends here a description of the deeds of brahmins. They contrast dramatically with those of kṣatriyas.

62.3. *they are all duly enjoined upon the* kṣatra: Given the following stanza, the main point of this stanza is emphatically to exclude brahmins from war-making and governance.

62.6. *who carries out all the Meritorious Deeds in all four of the religious Patterns of Life: āśrameṣu caturṣv api / sarvadharmopapannasya.* This noun phrase is a reference to the "*samuccaya*" version of the *āśramas* which became the standard form of the system; against the earlier notion that the four *āśramas* are four separate, alternative Patterns of Life pursued for a lifetime, it argues that a person has no choice, should ideally complete them all; see Olivelle, *Āśrama System*, 79 and 134–36. Note the use of the particle *api* with a numeral to lay special stress on the number. Here that emphasis coordinates with the *sarva-* (all) to indicate unmistakably the idea that the ideal brahmin performs the whole aggregation of these works.

62.11. *some are finite gifts, and formerly some effected the highest good: antavanti pradānāni purā śreyaskarāṇi.* I am not at all sure how to interpret this verse (11ab). What I give is a plausible rendering of the words, but I do not recognize the ideas. But nothing better occurs, and Nīlakaṇṭha's text of 10cd and 11ab is fundamentally different.

63.4. *ends up taking commissions from one and all: grāmapraiṣyaḥ.* As Patrick Olivelle suggests in private correspondence, this term is similar to *grāmayājin* at Manu 4.205, a word that refers to "one who serves as priest for the multitude, for the whole village, without discriminating between the worthy and the unworthy." The context here seems somewhat broader, though, than that in Manu.

63.5. *should be used like one of the servants: dāsavac cāpi bhojyaḥ.* Nīlakaṇṭha takes the gerundive *bhojya* in its most concrete sense: such a brahmin is "to be made to eat (on public occasions when a wealthy patron feeds brahmins)" as if he were a śūdra. I prefer to construe the sense more generally, taking *dāsavat*, "like a servant," as similar to "village menial" in 4d.

63.6. *a wild Āśana:* An otherwise unknown word. Belvalkar, drawing upon Pāṇini's mentioning an "Aśani" tribe that lives on warfare (at *Aṣṭādhyāyī* 5.3.117), conjectures that Āśana might mean a "storm-trooper." In all likelihood the word refers to some kind of non-urban people outside the control of Aryan society. As *dasyu-s* ("barbarians" in this translation) frequently looked like "robbers" to Aryan settlements, such people on the margins of Aryan society probably often seemed "warlike" (as in popular American images of Native Americans through much of the twentieth century.)

63.11. *Should someone of the three Orders wish to live according to the religious Patterns of Life:* The following discussion presumes a very different relationship to the *āśramas* on the part of brahmins, on the one hand, and non-brahmins on the other. And it is not at all clear what understanding of the idea of *āśrama* should be understood here (see the note above to 12.62.6). On its face, and given our ignorance of the situation the author(s) took for granted, the passage seems rife with inconsistencies. For example, given the prerequisites specified in 12, 15, and 16–20, ślokas 13 and 14 ("All the Patterns of Life, except renunciation, are prescribed for śūdras, vaiśyas, and kṣatriyas") must signify that while these people were formerly living productive lives as citizens (or kings), husbands, and fathers, they were not regarded as living in the householder *āśrama* according to dharma. This agrees with the point made in stanza 7 ("So, king, Virtue has been assigned to the brahmin. . . . And, too, every one of the Religious Patterns of Life was bestowed upon the brahmin by Brahmā in the past."). But what does it mean for such people, who have already married and produced children, to have available to them "all the *āśramas* except renunciation?" Another surface inconsistency in the passage (one likely to be the result of an interpolation) is that right after excluding renunciation for vaiśyas and kṣatriyas (14cd), ślokas 15–21 affirm its possibility for them.

63.13. *who has only a short while, or who is in his tenth decade: alpāntaragatasyāpi daśadharmagatasya vā.* The interpretation of these two conditions, the latter one especially, is uncertain. I have chosen to adopt Patrick Olivelle's interpretation of them as given in his translation of this passage in *The Āśrama System* (194, which forms part of a larger discussion of śūdras' participation in the *āśramas*). I am not completely comfortable construing *daśadharma* as "tenth decade"—this interpretation does not make clear the exact meanings of all the compound's elements—but it is a plausible interpretation that fits the contexts of the compound's three occurrences in the *ŚP*, and no better or more apt explanation is available. Arjunamiśra's commentary to the current passage does construe the word *daśa*, "ten," to refer to a period of ten years, but his explanation of the compound is not complete and not all clear. A check of parallel or similar expressions (see *MBh* 7.122.19, 12.66.25, and 69.25, and the possibly closely related 5.33.82, with their attendant commentaries) provides no better resolution of the question. The notion that the compound might refer to some transient state of mental debility or infirmity (based on 5.33.82 and Nīlakaṇṭha's commentary there) does not really fit these passages very well. Quite possibly, this rather unusual term is a corruption of some earlier expression, though the Southern manuscripts' reading of *daśādharma* (*daśā* means "period or stage of life," or "particular circumstance") for *daśadharma* at 7.122.19 seems really to create a *lectio facilior*.

63.15. *may enter the cycle of the Life-Patterns: vaiśyo gacched anujñāto nṛpeṇa āśramamaṇḍalam.* As the next ślokas (16 ff.) declare a policy at odds with what was stated just above in 14 (renunciation is not for vaiśyas nor for kṣatriyas, as it is not for śūdras), so too does 15 here seem to declare that the king may permit a qualified vaiśya to go through the whole series of *āśramas*. That would seem to be the point of the word "circle" (*maṇḍala*) here; it is not, of course, the only sensible way to construe the word here.

63.23. *They do not call this a terminal action: na caitan naiṣṭhikaṃ karma.* The interpretation of this somewhat obscure śloka is based on (1) the clear-cut separation presented in the preceding between the appropriation of the *āśramas* by brahmins and by non-brahmins; and (2) Olivelle's highlighting the fact that before the idea developed that one person should ideally transit all four *āśramas* in a single lifetime, the four *āśramas* were understood to be permanent, life-long "vocations" (see Olivelle, *Āśrama System*, 74–83). Accordingly I interpret the "three" to be the three non-brahmin *varṇas* of society whom the current text assumes do not currently have access to the dharmas of the *āśramas*, and the "four different kinds of men dwelling in the four Life-Patterns" (*caturṇāṃ . . . āśramavāsinām*) to be brahmins who have had access to the *āśramas* as permanent *vikalpas*, "vocation-choices." On the basis of this interpretation of the "three" and the "four," I interpret the word *naiṣṭhika* (which means "at the end, terminal, definitive") as pertaining to the very feature that distinguishes the *vikalpa* understanding of the *āśramas* from the *samuccaya* understanding of them: namely, is one's participation in an *āśrama naiṣṭhika*, "terminal, definitive, permanent" or not? For the author of this text, it seems, brahmins did permanently dwell in one *āśrama*, while non-brahmins (with some of the puzzles noted above in the note to 63.11) could "enter the circle, or cycle (*maṇḍala*), of the *āśramas*" (15d), and the king at the end of his life could go through all the *āśramas* in order (21). This text would seem to reflect a state of development in the institution of the *āśramas* that was right at the transitional boundary between its two developed forms. Given the difficulty I noted earlier (again, in the note to 63.11) regarding the text's opening the *āśramas* of studentship and householding to men who have already married and produced children, I wonder if there ever existed a ritual that could effectively whisk a person through more than one *āśrama* in a ritual session of relatively short duration.

63.30. *The constant taking of life in the state of nature . . . : yathā jīvāḥ prakṛtau vadhyamānā dharmāśritānām upapīḍanāya / evaṃ dharmā rājadharmair viyuktāḥ sarvāvasthaṃ nādriyante svadharmam.* The stanza poses syntactic difficulties, and my interpretation is quite uncertain. The state of *prakṛti* must signify a condition outside the rule of a king, and thus Laws (as norms or ideals of behavior) separated from a king's doing his Lawful Duty of punishment are, by analogy, also "slain" constantly, that is, neglected or contravened. But the most obscure element in the stanza is the unstated connection between "the constant taking of life in the

state of nature" (*prakṛtau*) and the trouble that causes for those devoted to Law. I have to infer that dharma here refers to the tenderheartedness of those dedicated to the values of the newer dharma, *ahiṃsā*, generosity, and so on.

64.21. Technical Note: *those that are distinguished as the Law of* kṣatra: *kṣatradharmāviśiṣṭāḥ*, with *-dharmāviśiṣṭa* for *-dharmaviśiṣṭa* because of the meter.

65.4. *Only he who desires the Merit of doing a Lawful Deed lives the Life-Pattern: cared eko hy āśramaṃ dharmakāmaḥ.* A point that turns upon the distinction between simple actions and actions that are dharma, that is, actions that are "good" and accumulate Merit (dharma) for the next life. This distinction has been implicit in much of the preceding discussion (since 12.60) of the *āśramas*. Just as with rituals of dharma, so the person undertaking an *āśrama* must have some qualification, some "standing," that entitles him to perform the action (*adhikāra*). The basic qualification for a ritual is a desire for the benefit it is said to produce ("heaven," *svarga*, for example). Here that has been generalized to a simple desire for the Merit, the "good karma," that produces benefits in the next life.

65.5ab. *When a judicial proceeding is underway, which is a matter affecting all: sāmānyārthe vyavahāre pravṛtte.* These two pādas seem to be a disconnected fragment. They are syntactically incomplete and their sense does not fit the context very well.

65.5cd–6. *They say that the Law of* kṣatra, *with all its exertions, is a religious Life-Pattern: sarvodyogair āśramaṃ dharmam āhuḥ / kṣātram.* As Olivelle has pointed out, the sense of labor and exertion is at the heart of the notion of the *āśrama*. Historically it was forms and derivatives of the root √*sram*, *śrāmyati* that most often expressed this sense of work. Here the word used is *udyoga*, which has many nuances that are very different from *śrama*, but in this context the basic idea is the same (Olivelle, *Āśrama System*, 8–24).

I take pādas 5cd as an apposition to the following *sarvodyogair* of 6a. Pādas5cd and 6ab may have been composed, or stitched together, as a single stanza, for just as 5ab is an orphan in this context, 6cd is independent of 6ab.

65.5d. *with these and those robust measures and restraints: tais tair yogair niyogair aurasaiś ca.* The word *aurasa* (an adjective meaning "from the chest" which typically refers either to one's "own, legitimate" son, or to the force and might of one's chest) is used slightly unusually and somewhat unclearly here. Nīlakaṇṭha glosses the word *pauruṣaiḥ* ("human, personal, or manly"), by which he must take it to emphasize the king's exertions as a human agent, as opposed to his relying upon fate or chance, an important theme of Bhīṣma's kingly instructions (e.g., see *MBh* 12.56.14, where practically the first words out of Bhīṣma's mouth are "always commit yourself to making your own energetic efforts" [*utthāna*]). The interpretation "robust" is quite plausible and fits the context well.

65.6cd. *then it is wrong that they speak of these and those "Laws": tāṃs tān dharmān ayathāvad vadanti*, which is, most literally, "they speak wrongly of these and those dharmas." If they are not actually doing what is their proper dharma, then they are wrong to speak of what they do as "deeds of dharma"; they are just ordinary human activities motivated by pleasure (kāma) or the desire for practical gain (artha).

65.7. *wild, completely lawless, enterprises: nirmaryāde . . . arthe.* The word *maryādā* is "custom or law" in the sense of limit or boundary, and the word *nirmaryādā*, "having no limits or laws," often signifies a terrifying chaos.

65.8. *The way of brahmins with the Triple Learning°: traividyānāṃ yā gatir brāhmaṇānām.* The "way" of Veda-educated brahmins is *svādhyāya*, the regular recitation of the Veda and the educational and ritual obligations that accompany that learning.

65.10. *One's basic character: dharma.* This is not the same word as the ethical dharma, but the two words are related historically, as this instance shows.

65.23. *though under different outer manifestations: liṅgāntare.* In general contexts the word *liṅga* usually means "mark, outward sign or appearance," and that is how it functions here. My interpretation of the use of the word here is guided by its use at 66.3 just below. In that passage, the burden of the argument is that one may essentially be in a particular Life-Pattern, though "outer appearances may be different" (*liṅgāntara*). Ganguli construes the words of the compound in the same way, as "in disguise," but he takes the word *dasyu* to mean simply "robber," and so he must interpret the *liṅgāntara* as being villainous.

65.35. *Make them turn: vartasva*, which I take to have a causative sense here, because of the overall gist of the passage.

66.3. *Law that is subject to different appearances: liṅgāntaragatam . . . dharmam.* What follows is a listing of various activities of a king and the interpretation of each of them as belonging to one or another Life-Pattern. The activities so interpreted are not normally associated with the Life-Patterns to which they are assigned, and the names used to refer to the Life-Patterns are not the usual formulaic names. Thus it is that the Meritorious, Lawful activities of the different Life-Patterns are said to occur here "subject to different appearances," or "signs" than they usually do.

66.8. *He who performs the daily observances and the sacrificial rites for creatures:* An allusion to the "five great sacrifices," the *mahāyajñas*; see the note at 68.34 below. The rites "for people" would refer to hospitality toward guests and the making of gifts, that is, grants and alms.

66.29. *householding removes what is inauspicious:* It is *dīptanirṇayam*. The word *dīpta* refers to anything "blazing," that is, inauspiciously hot and in need of "pacification" (*śānti*). The word *nirṇaya* signifies "removal"; see the note to 11.2.2 above. Nīlakaṇṭha is silent, and Ganguli misses the sense, rendering the compound as a phrase adverbially modifying the proposition: "The conclusions in respect of it are very clear."

66.31. *which is buoyed up by the Good Law: dharmotthitā*, literally "raised aloft on."

66.32. *Universal Existence* again translates *sattva*, as at 12.47.17 and 35. It refers to the totality of all that exists as a unity distinct from its source, *brahman*.

67.23. *The sin of these deeds will go away: karmaṇaino gamiṣyati.* Evidently inspired by one of the variant readings, Belvalkar suggested we understand this sentence to say, "The sin will entail upon the [doer of the] act." But the word for action here is either *karmaṇā* or *karmaṇaḥ*, neither of which supports that construction.

67.24. *the foremost weaponry: mukhyena śastrapatreṇa.* The compound *śastrapatra* is obscure. Nīlakaṇṭha construes *patra* as "conveyance" and sees the compound as a *dvaṃdva*, which is certainly plausible. The word *patra*/*pattra* would seem fundamentally to mean "what makes something fly or rush on," but I suspect that if there is any such sense in this compound, it is the travel of the sharp-bladed weapon that was intended, rather than the travel of the warrior. The word *patra* often refers to the feathers and wings of birds, and the fletching of an arrow is the arrow's *patra*. Possibly relevant too is the fact that the referents of the word *patra* were extended from the feathers and wings of birds to the "leaves" and "petals" of plants and flowers, which many blades resemble in shape (the name of a frequently mentioned hell is *asipatravana*, "The Forest of Sword-Blades/Leaves"). The compound occurs at two other places in the *MBh* (8.58.12 and 12.102.2), but they do not clear matters up.

68.24. Technical Note: *All would perish in an instant: kṣaṇena vinaśet sarvam.* It is unusual for this neuter singular noun, *sarvam*, to be used as a collective term for subjective beings, as if it were the same as the noun *jagat*, which is a neuter singular noun that can refer to "moving, or living, creatures" as a collective totality. The neuter plural expression *sarvāṇi bhūtāni* (all beings) occurs often enough in this meaning, and *sarvam* and *sarvam idam* (all this) occur as collective expressions embracing absolutely everything in the world, but I do not ever recall seeing *sarvam* used as it is used here and in 68.27 just below.

68.27. Technical Note: *all would panic and run every which way: bhayārtaṃ vidravet sarvam.* Again *sarvam* is used as a collective noun referring exclusively to subjective beings. See the note to 68.24 above.

68.28. *with their senses and bodily faculties doing whatever they wanted: svecchendriyaḥ*, the opposite of *jitendriya*, "having conquered one's senses," "having brought one's senses under control." Normally the compound *jitendriya* seems to apply only to one's sensory faculties. But since the context here is one in which action is stressed positively, I have registered the active, bodily faculties in the translation as well. These eventually become distinguished as the five "faculties of action" (*karmendriyas*, which are the hands, feet, voice, organ of generation, and anus) as opposed to the five faculties of sensation (*buddhīndriyas*, hearing, touching, seeing, tasting, and smelling).

68.34. *the different Great Sacrifices: mahāyajñaiḥ pṛthagvidhaiḥ.* A reference to the late-Vedic and post-Vedic theme that transposes some of the rhetoric and ideology of the ritualized worship

of the Vedic sacrifices (*yajñas*) onto the daily life of a householder; see Manu 3.68–75. For a brief, comprehensive discussion of this transposition and its history, see Olivelle, *Āśrama System*, 53–55.

68.53. *bottomless: apratiṣṭham*, which Medhātithi (at Manu 3.180, where the word is used differently, but with the same essential meaning) glosses with "*avidyamānā pratiṣṭhāsthithir yasya*, "where there is found no ground to stand on."

69.19. *one who has no allies: anantaram*, which Nīlakaṇṭha glosses with *bandhujanahīnam*, "having no kinsmen or friends."

69.27. *the character of the kingdom is determined by these: tatra rājyam vyavasthitam;* judicial proceedings and judgments (*vyavahāras*) settle or fix a kingdom's specific limits and policies, its *vyavasthā*.

69.38. *Disputing with his immediate neighbor: vivadan bhūmyanantaram.* It is worth mentioning that Kauṭilya uses the term *bhūmyanantara* to define "enemy" at *AŚ* 6.2.14. This entire śloka is a self-contained description of hostile relations between neighboring kings which is basically an intrusion in this context. It seems to have been interpolated because its first verse aptly alludes to the measures described in the preceding verse. Obviously the draining and befouling of water resources recommended in 37cd would, under normal circumstances, bring a kingdom into contention with its immediate neighbors. Stanza 37, however, is part of a passage describing a kingdom's defensive measures when under attack.

69.42. kaḍaṅga *doors:* I speculate that *kaḍaṅga* may be a straw mat on the basis of the words *kaḍaṃkara* ("straw") and *kaḍaṅgaka*, which is glossed in the Indian lexical tradition as *niṣpāva*, "fan." Also, Belvalkar calls attention to the Marathi word *kaḷaka*, "bamboo," which could be related. I imagine the text to be describing apertures in the wall for air-shafts.

69.43. *He should always have heavy apparatus positioned over the gates; he should have deadly "hundred-killers" set in place. He should make sure these things are kept under firm control: dvāreṣu ca gurūṇy eva yantrāṇi sthāpayet sadā / āropayec chataghnīś ca svādhīnāni ca kārayet.* I am basically following the lead of Edward W. Hopkins ("The Position of the Ruling Caste in Ancient India," 178, note) in translating 43ab here. *Yantra-s* are "devices" or "machines" of some kind, often used for sending projectiles at enemies, often used to raise, lower, or move platforms or ladders; in one instance the fulcrum of a scale. See *AŚ* 2.18.1, 5–6, and 15, as well as R. P. Kangle's accompanying notes for one interesting survey of such devices. Hopkins has a useful survey of the term in the same essay (301–2), and S. D. Singh extends the discussion in *Ancient Indian Warfare* (112–15). Concerning *yantras* and the "hundred-killers" (*śataghnī-s*) mentioned here, J. N. Sarkar offered the following nice summary (under the heading "Siege Engines," in *The Art of War in Medieval India:* "In the epic age *Yantras* or instruments of various kinds were used, specially for offensive and defensive purposes, and displayed on walls of cities or forts. These hurled stones or rained arrows on the enemy and produced great noise. Perhaps these were catapults, ballistae, or huge bows and were simple and slow-acting mechanisms and hence generally ineffective. Besides these *Yantras* there was the *sataghni* or columns of wood or stone or metal (lit. hundred killer). The large ones were hurled on the enemy, from city walls or gates, often wheeled or spiked and with bells, while the smaller ones could be held in hand and served as ordinary missiles or projectiles" (163). He goes on to discuss in some detail the design of different kinds of projectile engines and siege devices. Of some value too are Hopkins's general notes on cities, gates, and their defenses in both the old Indian epics (ibid., 177–78 and 299–302, with the notes; Hopkins's remarks, however, are sometimes marred with an unaccountable spitefulness).

72.9. *plagues the king's subjects with wrong policies: prajāḥ kliśnāty ayogena.* This clause is identical to 70.18c above, where the subject was Kali, the demon of strife and discord. It seemed contextually most appropriate there to take *ayogena* as "with or by disconnection," that is, "with dissension." But in the context here, and in the similar one at 72.16 below, the sense that is most appropriate is "inappropriate, unsuitable."

72.19. Technical Note: *to the king: rajñi.* All mss. except the Śāradā and $K_{1,4}$ and D_1 change this awkward locative into a banal instrumental (yielding "[well protected] by a king"); the locative can be understood as used in the sense of a dative.

72.26. *keeping his subjects in the doing of their Law: dharme rakṣaṇam.* One of the main verbs for "defend, protect," namely √*rakṣ, rakṣati*, is also frequently used, as here, to signify "preserve, keep, maintain" something in a good state. Thus √*rakṣ* sometimes involves the idea of confining, forcing someone to stay in a state, preventing someone from straying, and so forth. The English verb "guard" blends these senses to a lesser degree.

73.22. *the property for performing those Rites of Law: asya dharmasya yogakṣemaḥ.* On this translation of *yogakṣemaḥ*, see Bühler's copious note to his translation of Manu 9.219.

74.20. *No one can contain the wind: na vai vātaṃ parivṛṇoti kaś cit.* Aila objects to the idea that Rudra could be like a cyclone and at the same time be the *ātman* of a person.

74.21. *so all are affected by the good and evil deeds of some: tataḥ sarvaṃ spṛśyate puṇyapāpaiḥ.* We saw the same use of *sarvam* to refer to an aggregation of subjective beings above at 68.24 and 27.

74.26. *A celibate student of the Veda: brahmacārin.* This instance of this word and its occurrence above in 15a prompt the question whether there might ever have existed a more general sense of the word *brahmacārin* than its usual restriction to celibate devotees of the Veda. The broader sense that I am tempted to see here would be simply "devoted to the *brahman*," that is, the Veda, though not necessarily a specially consecrated, celibate person, whether young or old. Such a sense is not mentioned in the standard dictionaries.

75.22. *The brahmin should always have water: nityodako brāhmaṇaḥ*, because of its regular use for ritual and purificatory purposes. See *BauDS* 2.2.3.1 and Vāsiṣṭha 8.17, as well as the quotation of them at *MBh* 5.40.23.

76.10. *keeping enough for his own subsistence if he is not able to restore the whole amount:* This translates the syntactically awkward and not unambiguous pāda d: *svakośāt tat pradeyaṃ syād aśaktenopajīvatā.* With Belvalkar I read pāda d as specifying that when the king is unable to restore to the victim all that was stolen (*aśaktena*), he is obligated to restore as much as he can while not endangering his own survival (*upajīvatā*).

76.26b. Text Amendment: Read *mahatām* for *vahatām*. Belvalkar rightly reads *bhāra āhite* with $Ś_1$ and $K_{1.2.4}$, but inexplicably abandons their reading of *mahatām* for the easier majority reading of *vahatām*.

80.5. *three bright virtues: tribhiḥ śuklaiḥ.* We can only guess what these three might be. Nīlakaṇṭha says they refer to "Veda, good conduct, and lineage" (*tribhiḥ śrutavṛttavaṃśaiḥ;* but Ganguli, who frequently absorbs such glosses of Nīlakaṇṭha's into his translation, wisely ignores this. The commentator Vādirāja offers two explanations: First, the three are the three Vedas; second, the three are the three classes of rites, "regular, contingent, and expiatory," (*nityanaimittikaprāyaścittarūpais tribhiḥ karmabhiḥ*).

80.7–16. *The command in the Veda which has been prescribed for presents for priests: yad idaṃ vedavacanaṃ dakṣiṇāsu vidhīyate.* Yudhiṣṭhira here launches a criticism, very much out of character for him, of the brahminic sacrifice that earns Bhīṣma's reproach ("No one attains anything great from insulting the Vedas," 10) and, eventually, his sarcasm ("Listen to me, learned expert," 16d). After this criticism of the unqualified command to give to brahmins after their ritual performances, Yudhiṣṭhira sustains his attack with further points supported with purported quotations or paraphrases of Vedic texts: He criticizes the sacrifice on the grounds it is "Soma-peddling," that is, the *dakṣiṇā* is a payment for the Merit the sacrifice produces (13); he suggests the sacrifice can be performed just by mental homologies that map the accoutrements of the sacrifice to the sacrificer's body (15ab); he cites Veda to the effect that asceticism is superior to sacrificial ritual (16ab). Bhīṣma, eventually losing patience, answers each objection.

80.8. *Nor is there any prescription regarding wealth from the Laws for times of distress: nedaṃ prati dhanaṃ śāstram āpaddharmaṃ śāstrataḥ.* In 7 Yudhiṣṭhira has complained that the basic prescription specifies no terminus of the presents. Here he presumes that someone interested in defending the basic injunction against his criticism might simply invoke "Distress-Law," the principle that one give "as much as he is able," to supply the limitation for which he criticizes the basic injunction. Yudhiṣṭhira rejects that idea, for "Distress-Law" is not party to the injunctions, by its very nature as an exception.

80.9. *Holding fast to one's Trusting Surrender: śraddhām ārabhya.* Recall the discussion of *śraddhā* at 12.60.36–52, where the context was also the issue of *dakṣiṇā*.

80.13 (1). *Soma is the king of the brahmins: HDhŚ* (2: 139–40 and 143–44) points out a basic use of this idea: that the allegiance of brahmins is not to the human king. This assertion entails a justification for brahmins' being exempt from royal taxation.

80.13 (2). *Because of this, the rite of sacrificial worship is performed with Merit that has been sold: tena krītena dharmeṇa tato yajñaḥ pratāyate.* We have here the transformation of an old offense —the selling of the Soma plant to enable the performance of the sacrifice—into a general criticism of the exchange of riches for the ritual performance of the priests: Priests' accepting *dakṣiṇā* makes them into Soma-peddlers. See *HDhŚ*, 2: 1141–46 for a description of Soma's ritualized acquisition for *yajñas*, including the mock beating of the Soma-seller. "Soma-peddler" (*somavikrayin*) came to be a term of great opprobrium (e.g., see Gautama 15.18, Manu 3.158, and *MBh* 5.35.39, 13.24.15, 90.7, 131.24), though Bhīṣma, at *MBh* 12.35.31, has said that "the selling of Soma is not sinful if one fully understands the essence of it." Bühler pointed out in a note to Manu 3.158 that Medhātithi, in his comment on that stanza, records the fact that some thinkers interpreted the opprobrious phrase "seller of Soma" as the general accusation of selling the merit of rites. It is not possible to determine whether *MBh* 12.35.31 means the idea broadly or narrowly, but 12.80.13 here is unambiguous.

80.15. *The body comprises the vessels of the sacrifice: śarīraṃ yajñapātrāṇi.* The point here seems to be the suggestion that sacrifices be done in the mind of the participant on the basis of homologous connections between components of a person's body and components of the sacrifice (the commentator Vādirāja lists "the *vedi* is the back, hair the stalks of *darbha* grass, the tongue the *sruk* and *sruva* spoons"). To the extent that this understanding might be followed, actual, physically realized, expensive sacrifices would be superfluous. Bhīṣma's rebuttal is that only brahmins of exalted consciousness are capable of correctly making such offerings.

80.16. *Asceticism is better than sacrificial worship:* The final criticism is that the *yajña* is a lower form of religious action. Bhīṣma's interpretation of asceticism in terms of spiritual virtues, rather than in the older terms of a life of physically tormenting the body (*śarīrasya śoṣaṇam*), represents the interesting reinterpretation of the more concrete religious praxis of the past in newer, more spiritual, subjective, or psychological terms that becomes common in the *MBh* and collateral texts such as Manu.

80.18. *having no absolutes anywhere: avyavasthā ca sarvatra.*

81.4. *a fifth friend:* An interesting śloka: *dharmātmā pañcamaṃ mitraṃ sa tu naikasya na dvayoḥ / yato dharmas tato vā syān madhyastho vā tato bhavet // 4 //.*

82.0. This chapter is one of those bright windows looking out onto Kṛṣṇa's life apart from the Pāṇḍavas that we suddenly stroll by from time to time as we move down the twisting corridor of the *Great Bhārata's* tale. The discussion here looks back to events of Kṛṣṇa's earlier struggle against King Kaṃsa of Mathurā (narrated in the *Harivaṃśa* and the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*) as it looks forward to the contentious climax in *The Book of the Clubs*, Book 16 of the *Mahābhārata*, where the tribe degenerates into drunken self-annihilation. A later chapter in Book 12 (*MBh* 12.223), reporting Kṛṣṇa's praise of Nārada to the Yādava king Ugrasena, does not seem to share anything with these other windows—neither the foreground nor the background.

82.9. Technical Note: *Constantly solicited: nivārito nityam.* I take this to be a causative participle from ²√vṛ, *vṛṇoti* "choose, prefer." Such a form seems not to have been attested previously, but seems plausible in this context. Of course, taking the participle as previously attested (as deriving from ¹√vṛ, *vṛṇoti*, "cover, block") and understanding it to mean "obstructed," or "hindered" makes good sense in the context, and may be the correct interpretation.

83.18. Text Reading Note: *I have come:* Read *sarvātmanāgataḥ* for *sarvātmanā gataḥ.* Understanding the participle as *āgata*, "come (here), or, returned," rather than as *gata*, "gone," seems to me to make better sense in the context. See 23d below. Belvalkar's gloss of the participle is not clear.

83.44. *a river called Sītā:* Perhaps the same river Sītā mentioned at *MBh* 6.7.45 as one of the seven streams into which the celestial Gaṅgā split over the northern mountains upon descending from Brahmā's heaven. See too the brief mention of a river Sītā at *MBh* 3.186.93.

83.46 (1). *so none can get down to the water: durgatīrthā (nadī).* "A river with an impassable *tīrtha;* the word *tīrtha*, frequently thought of as a "ford across" a river, often refers simply to a passageway or stairs leading down to a body of water.

83.46 (2). *a King* haṃsa: *rājahaṃsa.* According to Dr. Julia Leslie of the School of Oriental and African Studies, London—one of the principal experts on ornithology in Sanskrit literature—it is not yet possible to identify precisely the *rājahaṃsa* (personal communication). According to Leslie, Jean Philippe Vogel overstated the matter when he concluded that the word *haṃsa* "always designates the goose and nothing else" (*The Goose in Indian Literature and Art*, 74). She believes the word often refers to a species of goose, but does not always do so. "The term *haṃsa* may therefore denote any one of a number of large, aquatic birds, or all of them together in some vague, collective way, or even a mythical bird," Leslie writes. She goes on to indicate evidence that, besides various species of geese, the word might apply to the swan or the flamingo in given instances. Her view is that a specific identification of what is meant by the name *haṃsa* in any particular Sanskrit passage is only possible when ornithological information can be retrieved from the informed and careful study of contextual clues.

For purposes of identification, we have little to go on in this passage. The point of the metaphor here (as read in parallel to the other metaphors in this passage) is the contrast between something especially good and desirable (the king [from the point of view of the honest sage, Kālakavṛkṣīya], who is likened to honey, a good meal, a well, a river with sweet water, a *rājahaṃsa*) and something pernicious or dangerous that interferes with access to that good thing (the king's corrupt ministers, who are likened to the cliff just beyond the honey, to the poison that laces the good meal, to poisonous vipers around the well, to the prickly cane-breaks on the bank of the river, to dogs, vultures, and jackals around the *rājahaṃsa*). Kālakavṛkṣīya also argues that the ministers are contemptuous of the king and inimical toward him, while also trying to kill the sage who loves the king and wishes him well. Thus the *rājahaṃsa* is somehow especially good, attractive, noble, and benign in contrast to three kinds of animal that are all dirty, "unclean feeders," ugly, mean-spirited, and pernicious. The only concrete detal regarding the *rājahaṃsa's* identity we might glean here is that it does not eat carrion. It would seem probable that the bird imagined here by Kālakavṛkṣīya is taller than the animals surrounding it (emphasizing the king's majesty and nobility). And likely there is an intention to amplify Kālakavṛkṣīya's theme that the king is vulnerable to the pernicious ministers. These last two points find a parallel in the metaphor in ślokas 47–48 of the vine that winds itself around a great tree and eventually harms it fatally. Perehaps we are to understand the *rājahaṃsa* as also being less mobile on the ground than the animals that are around it. These considerations would seem to suggest we may have here a swan or flamingo (the latter might be especially suitable) rather than any goose. But given the lack of any descriptive detail, we cannot here move past noting these considerations, though they do convince me not to translate *haṃsa* here as "goose." So I merely transcribe *haṃsa* while translating the *rāja* with "King."

83.48a. Text Amendment: Read *tenaivopendhanenainam* for *tenaivopendhano nūnam.* Belvalkar's reading is found only in the Śāradā ms. and seems to me not only *difficilior* but unconstruable. Belvalkar's gloss of this reading in his notes strikes me as too forced. The reading I prefer is found in mss. throughout the subcontinent apart from Kaśmīr.

83.52. *I came here to learn about you:* Kālakavṛkṣīya came to see the king and determine how the king might receive accusations about his ministers. As he says in 50, he made inquiries about the king before making any denunciations, but the ministers forced his hand by killing the crow. Kālakavṛkṣīya is thus still nervous in this premature interview with the king. Reading Chapter 9.3 of Kauṭilya's *AŚ*, which concerns secret agents, sedition, and countersedition, gives this story extra depth.

83.54. *one must fear him like a snake when one has only broken its back: bhagnapṛṣṭhād ivoragāt.* Ganguli adds this note to his translation of this śloka: "The belief is still current that a wounded snake is certain to seek vengeance even if the person that has wounded it places miles of distance between himself and the reptile. The people of this country, therefore, always kill a snake outright and burn it in fire if they ever take it." Given the suppleness of a serpent's spine to begin with, saying that someone has broken its back seems almost to say one has not hurt it. Of course here Kālakavṛkṣīya is speaking of himself as the wounded enemy whom the ministers must now fear.

84.2. *men who are extremely wealthy:* Wealth, heroism, learning, and contentment—four

qualities corresponding to the four main attributes of the four Orders of society. I surmise that these first four attributes do assume the appointment of men—notice that this very general exhortation is not necessarily a continuation of the previous stanza's specification of members of the king's assembly—of the four different *varṇas* in one capacity or another. Thus I take the fifth attribute, "great determination" (*mahotsaha*) in connection with work, to be the one trait that is to be common to them all.

84.4. *who can bring you back to your main self: āvartayati bhūyiṣṭham.* Here *bhūyiṣṭham* could be taken as an adverb with the sense "most of the time, usually." But construing this śloka to say "the one man who can usually snap you out of [any special mood] is to be well-cherished" is less pointed and seems less likely.

84.6. *as long as their hands are moist: yāvad ārdrakapāṇayaḥ.* Like the English phrase "grease the palm," an apparent reference to bribery. The same idea is expressed at *MBh* 12.137.26, and while Nīlakaṇṭha's comments at both places affirm his understanding that these compounds refer to the offering of inducements, in neither location does he explain exactly what a "wet hand" has to do with it. In a note to 137.26 Belvalkar offers this gloss of *klinnapāṇiḥ*: "with [the right] hand ever wet [with water poured in the act of making unending presents]." I prefer the implications of Nīlakaṇṭha's comment here at 84.6, "The sense is that when their hands are left dry they are immediately altered (*śuṣkahastās tu sadyo vikriyante*)," that is, their initial good cheer turns to indifference or hostility.

84.18. Technical Note: *who wants . . . to flourish: (kartavyāḥ . . .) bubhūṣatā.* At *MBh* 4.28.4 and 5.69.2 van Buitenen renders this desiderative form with "wishing to (continue to) live," which is a plausible interpretation, given the semantics of this verb root. However, this particular meaning is not noted in the dictionaries for the desiderative stem of this root, and one wonders whether it is ever really justified to narrow the relevant idea from "flourish, prosper, be well" to "survive." This narrowing is more than plausible at 4.28.4 (*na avajñeyo ripus tāta prākṛto 'pi bubhūṣatā*), but does not seem warranted at 5.69.2, nor here.

84.20. *the five trials: pañcopadhāvyatītān. AŚ* 1.10 is devoted to the subject of ascertaining the loyalty of ministers by means of "secret tests" (Kangle's translation of *upadhā*). The king appears to violate the ritual precepts of Law and then, with the aid of secret agents, tries to arouse sedition among his ministers on the basis of that violation. A similar test has the king abuse his courtiers out of feigned paranoia. Two similar tests involve temptations to sedition for material gain (artha) and false invitations to sexual dalliance with the queen (kāma). Belvalkar suggests that our passage here intends these four tests and a fifth that combines all four of these tests and applies them to a single individual.

84.53. *No dwarves . . . should be there:* Because some such people may operate as spies. This list of people excluded by this special proviso is socially interesting. All fully able men, apart from the few selected as councilors, have been thematically excluded by virtue of the selection process which forms the subject of this particular consideration. On the other hand, this list is made up of people not considered in the first place, but who *(a)* might conceivably be present otherwise, as family members, servants, or loiterers, and so on, and *(b)* whose intelligence and complex motives might be overlooked completely by careless kings.

86.7. *three humble śūdras:* In the South Indian mss. and a few of the Devanāgarī ones, including those with Nīlakaṇṭha's commentary, an extra śloka also stipulates the inclusion of eighteen kṣatriyas and twenty-one vaiśyas. Interestingly, Nīlakaṇṭha's comment to 86.10 seems to know the text without this interpolation.

86.8. *the eight virtues:* According to Nīlakaṇṭha, the eight virtues meant are eager listening, ready learning, good comprehension, good memory, constructive reasoning, critical reasoning, the ability to understand things in specific detail, and the ability to understand things in terms of their fundamental realities (*śuśrūṣā, śravaṇa, grahaṇa, dhāraṇa, ūhana, apohana, vijñāna,* and *jñāna*). Though syntactically connected to the fifty-year-old bard, the attributes listed must also be intended to apply to the three śūdras as well.

86.9. *a decision to be rendered: kārya.* The Sanskrit word means "what is to be done" in the broadest possible sense of the verb "do." In this passage, concerned with judicial process, the word often refers to the case that must be dealt with by the king or his government (see *HDhŚ*, 3: 95 and 304), that is, the matter to be resolved; the process of a hearing, inquiry, or trial

that must be held to deal with the matter and resolve it; and the decision that must be rendered to resolve it. The word applies to all these different aspects of the process because all of these are *kāryas* of the king, things he must do at different points of the process.

86.10. *the seven hideous vices:* According to Nīlakaṇṭha, the seven addictions are hunting, dicing, women, drinking, punishing, speaking harshly, and squandering riches. This list is almost identical to that given at *MBh* 5.33.74; van Buitenen, 3: 259.

86.17. *people who have no protector: anāthānāṃ nṛṇām.* See the note to *MBh* 11.9.10. The next śloka, 86.18, makes clear that the context has shifted to judicial considerations; if 17 were interpreted independently, as an isolated exhortation, its sense would be, "The king should always be the protector of helpless people, who have been made that way forcibly by the powerful, and murmur so much in misery."

87.4. *the six kinds of "fortress":* See above at 12.56.35.

87.13. *grain-chaff: tuṣā,* used as a rapidly burning fuel. See *AŚ* 2.15.16.

88.3. Technical Note: *(he should appoint one) for twenty: dviguṇāyāḥ,* modifying an implicit *daśagrāmyāḥ*; literally, "of a set of ten villages times two." The term is used in the same way in 6d just below. The Citraśala edition, supported by Nīlakaṇṭha, reads *daśagrāmyāḥ* for *daśagrāmyaḥ* in pāda b, a variant not noted in the Pune apparatus.

88.8. *The king of the country: rāṣṭriyaḥ.* Surprisingly, the words *rāṣṭriya* and *rāṣṭrīya* (both are etymologically based on the common word *rāṣṭra*, "[governed] country, realm," and designate someone with some kind of connection "to the realm") are highly unusual. Neither occurs in the *AŚ* nor in the Dharmaśāstra literature. That the word can mean "king" is affirmed by *MBh* 12.138.70, where *suvīrarāṣṭriya* designates Śatruṃtapa, "the king of the Sauvīras" (138.4). The word should refer to the king here, for this half-śloka refers to the final position in the governing pyramid outlined in śloka 3. Nīlakaṇṭha is silent, and Ganguli renders it with "high officer."

88.9. *Whatever project is to be accomplished in a village: yad grāmakṛtyaṃ syāt.* By analogy with the word *kārya* (see the note to 86.9 above), I am tempted to see the gerundive *kṛtya* here as also referring to judicial matters. The second half of the stanza ("One of your deputies who knows Law . . .") would fit that sense well. But while *kārya* is sometimes used in judicial senses, I find no evidence that *kṛtya* is known to do so.

88.34. *if no exception is made for them: upekṣitāḥ,* most literally, "overlooked, neglected," but here "excused, excepted from the normal level and procedures of taxation." Herding peoples, *gomin-s,* are much more mobile than peasants, and the king must proceed much more gingerly with them.

89.1. *whose position is sound: samarthaḥ,* literally, "able, capable, sufficient, powerful." The king's being in general difficulties is the premise of 12.105 and one of the themes of *āpaddharma* (see 12.129.1 ff.); here we have the opposite.

89.10. Technical Note: *those who are inclined to support each other: parasparavivakṣitān.* Nīlakaṇṭha construes this word as the desiderative of the root √*vah, vahati* ("bear, carry, support"). This interpretation is morphologically plausible and I basically agree with it, as does Belvalkar. I do not follow Nīlakaṇṭha, however, in taking the participle to have a passive sense. Belvalkar's interpretation (*vi-*√*vah,* "alienate," would properly require the presence of another *vi-* . The known participle *vivakṣita* ("[what was] intended to be uttered," "intended meaning," "intention") occurs shortly below in 12b, a fact that suggests *vivakṣita* here should be understood as the same word. The attraction between these two uncommon instances is strong, but I see no obvious way to understand them as the same word. Perhaps we should underestand the instance here to mean something like "who intend to *pledge*" (loyalty or assistance) to each other.

89.14. *these . . . must be curbed: niyamya,* a somewhat ambiguous term that could mean anything from "halt absolutely" to "regulate." It is also not completely certain whether the second quarter of the stanza—"who are harmful to the country"—is to be taken as a restrictive relative clause (thus limiting the affected parties of this curbing only to such types as are determined to be harmful) or as a relative clause explaining the rationale for the curbing (thus not limiting the targets of the curbing, directing it toward all such institutions and persons). The emphatic particle *eva* following "all" in the first quarter of the stanza can be

taken as emphasizing "all" in such a way as to favor strongly the second interpretation of the relative clause.

89.15. *"No one may beg":* In light of the next stanza, this prohibition of begging seems primarily directed against religious mendicancy and amounts to a proscription of renunciation. See the next chapter.

89.18b. Typographical Error: Read *prasaṅgo* for *prasaṅge.* Once again I infer that the printed text is not what Belvalkar intended. Here the final syllable of the printed word, *ṅge*, has the "wavy line" under it which marks readings the editor regards as uncertain. But (1) the apparatus does not record a single variant reading for this syllable, and (2) the Citraśala edition reads *ṅgo* instead of the *ṅge.*

89.22. *he should make them pay as much in fines and taxes as they made those others lay out: prayogaṃ kārayeyus tān yathā balikarāṃs tathā.* The word *prayoga* signifies an outlay of capital intended to produce interest, the principal of a loan, an investment. Given the general context and tone of this piece, I take this stanza as referring to people who borrow money and do not repay it. The descriptive compound that is pāda b (*dhanādānaprayojanāḥ*), which I translate with "Those whose purpose is to take others' money," might be construed as referring to swindlers working confidence games, "Those with schemes to take others' money"; all things considered, however, I think that is unlikely here.

90.3. *If a brahmin sets out to leave: vipraś cet tyāgaṃ ātiṣṭhet.* I follow Nīlakaṇṭha's glossing *tyāga* as *tyāgam rāṣṭrasya,* "quitting the country."

90.4. *Now where is this person going to set a limit: kasmin idānīṃ maryādām ayaṃ lokaḥ kariṣyati.* Ganguli translates "In whom shall my people then find an authority for guiding them?" He plausibly takes the word *loka* in the sense of "the people," but less plausibly he construes "limit" (*maryādā*) in the sense of *pramāṇa,* "standard, authority." I believe Nīlakaṇṭha is right to take this reproach as a suggestion the brahmin is greedy. He paraphrases the intent of the reproach: "There is no end [*maryādā*] of it, not even after he gets the king's chariot and so on, if you say 'Well even that should be given to one who is leaving.' "

91.21. Technical Note: *expressed resentment: asūyāt,* a rare subjunctive form. Another subjunctive occurs just a few lines below, at 91.27 with the reading *upāvartāt.* There are at least three other instances in the *MBh* where indicative forms of the denominative stem *asūya-* have subjunctive variants: 5.88.66a, 12.218.13c (a thematically related passage), and 223.19a.

91.21–22. *the Goddess Royal Splendor left him: MBh* 12.215–221 contains two accounts of this incident as well as parallel narratives.

91.27. Technical Note: *The king should refrain from: upāvartāt.* A rare subjunctive form, see the note to 91.21 above.

91.30. *with eunuchs: klībāsu.* Note the unusual feminine, as at *MBh* 3.149.46.

92.2. *Just as a washerman . . . :* Nīlakaṇṭha takes this clause to say the washerman does not know how to cleanse dyed clothes without disturbing the color. The words could also mean "bleach dyed clothes."

92.14. Technical Note: *never, ever, think of the weak as contemptible: durbalāṃs tāta budhyethā nityam evāvimānitān.* I change the alpha-privative of the double negative *avimānita* (literally, "not dis-honored") into a negation of the verb for the sake of the English.

92.18. Technical Note: *Do not stand upon your strength, son: mā sma tāta bale stheyāḥ.* An unusual precative form that joins the other verbal archaisms of Utathya's speech; see the notes above to 91.21, 27.

92.19. Technical Note: *of those who make the false accusations:* The reading *abhiśāsatām* in pāda d, preserved in the single most conservative manuscript of the *ŚP* tradition, the Śāradā manuscript from Kaśmīr, reflects some practical confusion between the roots *abhi-√śaṃs,* "accuse," and *abhi-√śās,* "assign, rule, govern."

92.20. *like a cow:* This verse (or close parallels of it) is cited two other times in the *MBh,* and at Manu 4.172–3. As Georg Bühler pointed out in a note to his translation of Manu 4.172, the learned commentators to Manu explained that the simile works in two ways: (1) "cow" refers to the earth (a standard sense of the Sanskrit word *gauḥ*), which also does not produce its fruit immediately; and (2) "cow" refers to the animal, which does yield fruit immediately upon its being milked. As Bühler suggested, both these senses were probably alive in the minds of the author and many of his readers.

92.22. Technical Note: *regularly: abhīkṣṇam.* A clear case of *enjambment.*

92.26. *the principal Law: dharmam agryam.* Above at *MBh* 12.63.27, in a proto-śālinī triṣṭubh passage, this phrase was said to refer to the "giving up" (*tyāga*) that is at the heart of Lawful Deeds. It is not clear what it refers to here; probably the *śrauta* rites.

92.27. *the discord there among the strictly observant finds the king: satāṃ kalir vindati tatra rajñaḥ.* The text reads "Kings," plural, for the intended singular *(rājānam)* on account of the meter.

92.36. *upon every occasion: prāptyā,* literally "with what happens, or occurs, or is available"; that is, "with (any) thing that comes up." Not a regular expression at all; I basically follow Belvalkar's interpretation of it.

92.49. *Men abandon their wives and even their lives when they receive high honors:* What is the point of this observation? Is it meant to caution the king about bestowing honor? Or (more likely I think) is it meant as a caution for the king himself, similar to Utathya's admonitions against pride in the last chapter at 91.24–26?

93.17. *sophisticated: rasavedin;* sense uncertain. I take it to mean literally, "one who senses (tastes) the (extracted) essence." Conceivably it could be taken slightly differently, "connoisseur of (all the kinds of) tastes," with the burden that the king is broadminded and tolerant. Besides meaning "essence; juice; soup; and taste," generally, the word *rasa* also signifies the spices, the seasoning, in cooked dishes.

94.3. *when the king is in his normal state: prakṛtistha,* as opposed to when he is in difficulty *(viṣamastha).*

94.37. Technical Note: *one should be afraid of that man:* Belvalkar's choice of the highly irregular *vibhiṣet,* which is found only in the Śāradā manuscript and in Kaśmīri ms. no. 2 (D_1 and K_1 are missing) is very problematic and hangs by the barest thread. But it seems to me the sound choice of "the difficult reading." And difficult it is! I take it to be a metrically shortened form from the root √*bhī,* or √*bhīṣ,* "to fear." The author, it seems, wanted to use an optative form of this root to say "he should be afraid of," and either he used the highly unusual optative-aorist of an otherwise unknown aorist stem of √*bhīṣ* (*bhīṣa-*), or he simply violated the rules of Sanskrit grammar and appended a common set of optative-present suffixes, *-a-ī-t* directly to this root.

94.38. *One who is engaged in human conquest slays the highest enemies:* The "highest enemies" are anger, lapses of attention, indulgence of whimsy, and the similar vices that form an implicit and explicit theme of the preceding.

95.10. *those wholesome deeds for which the noble people long: yat kalyāṇam abhidhyāyet,* in which I understand the subject to be, not the king (who is the subject of the verb in the main clause), but the *āryajana* ("noble people") mentioned in a compound adjective in 10a.

95.11. *not even when work remains to be done: kṛtyaśeṣeṇa.* The exact point of this stanza, and the way it connects to the preceding ones, are not obvious and the words here could be taken otherwise. I take this to be a summary statement of what is sanctioned at Manu 7.216–25, where various pleasurable indulgences of the king are allowed in the interstices of his attending to his duties. The important subjective elements mentioned in this stanza—the possible contempt of his subjects, the possibility of the king's feeling like a shirker—only make full sense when we read into this stanza the limitations of the immediately preceding stanza and some of the prior ones. We should see the king here in stanza 11 to be the wise king of 10; the good, solicitous king who is the subject of this entire chapter. That is the only sort of king who might worry about shirking his duties, and that is the sort of king whose subjects would not think ill of him for dallying while he still has work to do.

Belvalkar suggests that *kṛtyaśeṣeṇa* actually means "the leisure left after fulfilling all his duties," but I think this interpretation adds too many ungrounded, speculative elements to the compound (really, it construes it as *kṛtakṛtyasya kālaśeṣeṇa*). Also it turns a very important sentence into an unnecessary platitude. In fact, I expect that Indian kings, and most other kings in most other lands, often inspired the contempt of their subjects for negligent,

hypocritical self-indulgence. The possible contempt of the king's subjects is one of the recurring concerns in various parts of the *RDh*.

Nīlakaṇṭha has suggested that the balance of unfinished royal work mentioned by *kṛtyaśeṣeṇa* amounts to the king's holding his subjects' good opinion hostage with their need for his pending services. This narrowly pragmatic reading is also certainly in tune with much else that is said in the *RDh* and in the *ADh*. *MBh* 12.136.105 expresses the point nicely: *na hi kaś cit kṛte kārye kartāraṃ samavekṣate / tasmāt sarvāṇi kāryāṇi sāveśeṣāṇi kārayet //* ("When a job has been finished, no one pays any attention to the one who did it; so one should make sure that all his tasks leave something still to be done.") *MBh* 12.67.12 ff. is one of a number of passages in the *RDh* that lists the benefits people derive from having a king.

96.1. *how can his conquest be Lawful: kas tasya dharmyo vijayaḥ*. This would seem clearly to be a quotation of the Aśokan term *dharmavijaya*, though it is rather a description of battlefield etiquette than of winning people over by appeals to Right. See the introduction to *The Book of Peace*.

96.17. *an Unlawful Deed one has done does not bear fruit immediately:* See the note to *MBh* 12.92.20 just above.

97.4. *Should he pass a year there, he would be born again from him:* Evidently a form of adoption. Nīlakaṇṭha says, "He would become the son of his conqueror and should then be set free."

97.6. *or else he should let it rest at the time:* Or, "it must be forgiven, or overlooked." I take this to mean that in the event the captured property is not put to use, either it should have been left alone in the first place, or it should be given up and allowed to revert to whomever it was taken from.

97.7. *assail: abhyaset*, literally "throw against, attack"; an uncommon sense of this verb and an irregular form of the present stem. See Manu 4.117 for another instance of this irregular optative form of this root.

97.8. *he would break an everlasting law: maryādāṃ śāśvatīṃ bhindyāt.*

98.6 (1). *the reaper: nirdātṛ*, who cuts all the plants in the field at once and discards the weeds while preserving the grain. In the second half of the verse, pāda b, *nirdan* is, as Belvalkar points out, a somewhat irregular present participle from the same root, which, in light of the verb "strike, slay," in the next verse of the stanza, must certainly be from the root √*dā, dāti*, "cut," and "mow," as BR classifies it. Nīlakaṇṭha proposes the root √*dai, dāyati*, "cleanse," as the source of the word, and Belvalkar sees this as a viable alternative. The word *nirdātṛ* occurs also at Manu 7.110 in a somewhat less concretely detailed couplet, which may or may not imply a harvest setting.

98.6 (2). *Just as the reaper:* The parallelism here is not as tight as usual, but still seems clear enough. The king will generate prosperity from the country after destroying its enemies with his sharp blades, just as the reaper harvests an abundance of grain after getting rid of the mowed weeds and leaving the mowed grain.

98.10. *the pole of the sacrifice: yūpa*, the pole to which the prospective animal offering was tethered during the rite, prior to being killed. Additionally, as Madeleine Biardeau has pointed out, the *yūpa* is the first living thing killed in carrying out a sacrifice, and then it stands on the boundary between the sacred realm of the *mahāvedi* (the easternmost part of the demarcated ritual area) and the realm of nature. See Hiltebeitel's presentation of Biardeau's points and his discussion of these and other aspects of the *yūpa* in *The Cult of Draupadī* (2: 117 ff.).

Regarding this verse and its connection with the protection of brahmins, see Scharfe, *State in Indian Tradition* (175, n. 3).

98.11. *absorbing the arrows of the enemy: pratigṛhṇañ śarān*. The participle here basically means "receiving"; this is an unusual way of describing getting hit with arrows, which occurs three other times in the epics (at 3.40.27, 4.43.7, and at *Rām.* 3.26.12).

98.13 (1). *His limbs are always bloody, even though he swings them this way and that: na tasya rudhiraṃ gātrād āvedhebhyaḥ pravartate.* The hero's blood flows so profusely that his limbs remain coated with it even as he rapidly moves them about in furious fighting. The ablative *āvedhebhyaḥ* complements the verb *pravartate* ("set out to go, depart") by providing the reason we would expect the blood to run off his limbs, "because of (all [the text is plural]) his waving (them) about."

98.13 (2). *even though he swings them this way and that: āvedhebhyaḥ*. The word *āvedha* is a rare word. It is the *lectio difficilior* here, supported only by the three best mss. from Kaśmīr, and it demonstrates once again the value of that textual tradition. It seems to occur only two other times in old Sanskrit literature, at *MBh* 1.179.18 and 2.62.28 (scholars interested in this word and in the semantics of the root √*vyadh* will find the apparatus at both *loci* interesting). Both times it occurs with the word *cela* (piece of clothing) and refers to a "waving or flapping of the clothing" as a sign of joyous approbation. See *MBh* 2.36.7 for a semantic parallel. The sense of "waving, flapping" works well here too (see the first note to this passage, above), but I was forced to wonder if *āvedha* might not be simply a slightly more emphatic word for *vedha* (wound, the opening caused by the striking of a weapon).

98.22 (1). *a fire with straw-mats: kaṭāgninā*. A mode of execution tantamount to burning at the stake. This word is typically translated as "straw-fire," but a *kaṭa* is a "mat," or sheet of woven straw, which was used for sitting on (see the commentator Aparārka on *Yājñavalkyasmṛti* 2.282). The commentator Kullūka on Manu 8.377 (Mandlik, ed.) states that the woven straw was to be wrapped around the offender being burned.

98.22 (2). *like animals:* That is, like the animals offered in the sacrifice that were killed by being smothered, rather than being cut with the blade of a weapon. Aśvatthāman made Dhṛṣṭadyumna die the death of a beast in the night raid, see *MBh* 10.8.18.

99.17. *blazing, hardened, and whetted: jvalanto niśitāḥ pītāḥ*. The metal fixed to the tops of these weapons and sharpened sparkles and gleams, so the weapons "blaze" like tongues of flames above fuel. "Tempered" is basically how Mohan Ganguli translated *pīta* in the P. C. Roy translation, and I believe he was generally correct in doing so (as opposed to van Buitenen's renderings of the word as "yellow metal," "copper" (see van Buitenen at 1.17.16; 1: 75 and 443). Evidently following Nīlakaṇṭha, J. D. Singh (*Ancient Indian Warfare*, 104) glosses *pīta* at *MBh* 7.74.7a with "tempered." I follow Nīlakaṇṭha in taking the word to be the past participle of a verb "drink," and as meaning literally "having been drunk," or "having drunk" (that is, having been immersed or steeped in liquid; quenched as part of the process of fashioning and finishing iron blades) See the mentions of the steel hardening process at 12.59.46 and 120.19ef. It is worth noting that, historically, oil has been used for this quenching as well as water; a fact that may have some bearing on the fact that weapons are several times described in the *MBh* as *tailadhauta*, "bathed in oil," though this could have more to do with keeping iron weapons free of rust.) I have examined this term and Nīlakaṇṭha's several glosses of it in the article "Sanskrit *pīta* and *śaikya/saikya*."

99.18. *racing away from the bow's violent thrust: cāpavegāyata*. In battle contexts the word *āyata* typically refers to the bow's being stretched; but here it refers to the arrow's "stretching out and away," from the bow.

99.19. *Sheathed in a tiger-skin scabbard: dvīpicarmāvanaddhaḥ*. Once again, I am grateful to Ganguli; here, for the interpretation of *avanaddha* as "scabbard."

99.20. *fused steel: śaikyāyasamaya. śaikya* co-occurs in the *MBh* with *saikya;* the latter is the primary form and is an adjective deriving ultimately from the root √*sic, siñcati*, "pour." This verb was used in late Vedic literature to refer to the pouring of molten, fused, metal (see W. Rau, *Metalle und Metallgeräte im vedischen Indien*, 37, n. 44), and twice in Book 2 of the *MBh* derivatives of this root refer to items made of molten gold (*śaikyam* at 2.45.27a and *siktam* at 2.49.15a; this latter usage provides the key to understanding the *śaikya/saikya* words). The adjective *saikya* (and then the co-occurring term *śaikya*) signifies metal that has been fused, and, except for the occurrence already noted, it refers to *ayas* metal (iron) in the *MBh* (there are altogether seventeen occurrences in the Pune edition). The word must describe steel that has been produced by fusion, probably the same as, or very similar to, the crucible-fused *wootz* that was being produced in southern India in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

In the ancient world iron could not be heated to a high enough temperature at a forge to fuse the metal, but iron could be fused in refractory clay crucibles. Crucible-fused steel was known in ancient China (see Joseph Needham, *The Development of Iron and Steel Technology in China*) and was also observed in southern India in modern times as the crucible-fused *wootz* in the eighteenth century. Awareness of *wootz* on the part of Western scientists played a critical role in the major nineteenth-century Western advances in steel metallurgy (see Cyril Stanley

Smith, *A History of Metallography: The Development of Ideas on the Structure of Metals Before 1890*, 25–29). This kind of steel was probably produced in ancient India as well. Ancient Western historians regarded Indian steel as special and superior (see R. Pleiner, "The Problem of the Beginning of the Iron Age in India"; D. K. Chakrabarti, *The Early Use of Iron in India*, 116–19; see also R. J. Forbes, *Metallurgy in Antiquity: A Notebook for Archaeologists and Technologists*, 438–9 [but see Pleiner's criticisms of Forbes in "Problem," 17 and n. 89]). The Romans imported large quantities of it (see E. H. Warmington, *The Commerce between the Roman Empire and India*, 257–58, 259, and 290–91; see also 265–66, concerning Rome's exports of lead, tin, copper, and brass to India). It was the basic steel used in making the famous steel of Damascus (see Forbes, *Metallurgy in Antiquity*, 439; and Smith, *History of Metallography*, 14–25, esp. 14, 21–22, 23–24. For notices on Arab sources discussing iron and steel and their observations on the superior metals of India and China, see Wertime, *The Coming of the Age of Steel*, 200, n. 3). As we seem definitely to have references here in the *MBh* to fused steel, it seems a fair inference to conclude that steel produced similarly to *wootz*, and having many of the same superior qualities, was produced in ancient India and known to the *Mahābhārata*. I have examined this issue in much greater depth in my article "Sanskrit *pīta* and *śaikya/saikya*."

99.23 (1). *his "Soma-Cart Shed": havirdhāna.* A shed located on the eastern part of the *mahāvedi* (an area to the east of the main hall; the main hall is where the three main fires are located and where most of the action of the ritual takes place). It houses two carts on which are the Soma stalks and other offerings for the rite. The descriptions of the technical ritual terms here are basically taken from Renou's *Vocabulaire du rituel Védique*.

99.23 (2). *the piled up fire altar called the "Hawk Altar" for his sacrifice:* The fire altar deliberately built up brick by brick in layers (hence the connection to aggregations of the war-dead) in the "Fire-field" *(agnikṣetra)*, which is on the "Superior Ritual Area" *(uttaravedi)*, which is positioned on the "Master Ritual Area" (the *mahāvedi*) to the east of the Soma-Cart Shed. The fire altar was used for offerings in the animal sacrifice and the Soma rites. The sacrificer, who is a warring king, is fighting the enemy, whose front line is the king's Soma-Cart Shed. His "Hawk Altar" then lies behind the enemy's line. The analogy describes the protagonist sacrificer-warrior piling up his fire altar with the bodies of war dead as he pushes the fighting back to the east; that is, as he repels the enemy away from the interior of his ritual compound.

99.24. *A headless corpse standing upright there in the midst of the thousands slain is . . . [the] slaughter-post:* The description moves further to the east, past the heap of the fire altar to the *yūpa*, which sits half on, half off the *mahāvedi*.

99.28. *dark blue swords shaped like the crescent moon:* I agree with Belvalkar that this must refer to the crescent shape of the first digit of the moon which appears more deeply blue than the twilight sky at sunset.

99.30. *rafts: saṃghāṭā-s*, a word not widely attested and difficult to construe. As does BR, I base my understanding upon its occurrences in the epic literature (which now includes several previously unknown occurrences in the *MBh*), etymology, and the commentaries upon its three occurrences in *Rām*. All of this leads me to the view that the word signifies basically "some assembly of pieces of wood that, at least sometimes, forms a kind of boat, a raft." In the battlefield-river analogies it is typically elongated entities—bodies, bones, spears—that form these *saṃghāṭās*.

99.31. *moss: śaivala*, duckweed *(Blyxa octandra)*; see BR.

99.32 (1). *the reeds along its shore: vānīra, Calamus rotang*; see BR.

99.32 (2). *it is hard to cross even by men thoroughly familiar with it: dustarā pāragair naraiḥ.* One is an "expert" (*pāraga*) by virtue of having "gone to the further shore" of some area of knowledge. As remarked in the footnotes, the word also signifies here "one who is on his way to the further shore, one who is trying to get across." This word itself and its dual application here are one of many indications of the fundamental importance of rivers and river-crossings in the lives and thought of people in ancient India.

99.33 (1). *backbone: anūka.* These three kinds of upright-standing objects make the imaginary river appear to be like a curving, knobby backbone. Belvalkar's emendation to *dhvaja*, "flag," from the well-attested *vaha*, "shoulder (of a draft animal)"—and other meanings—does not seem warranted, though I have translated it. One reason for my accepting it is that I cannot think of a way to construe the compound "spear-sword-shoulder-backbone" as an adjective describing a river.

99.33 (2). *jungle crows: vaḍa.* See the first note to 11.16.7.

99.36–38. *The experts say that that belongs to him who . . . :* These ślokas invoke the spatial layout of the sacrificial compound differently than was done above in 99.23–24. Whereas earlier the Soma-Cart Shed that holds the offerings was the front line of the enemy army, and the valiant sacrificer-king piled up many dead as his fire altar behind that line (amidst which heaps of dead stood the headless corpse that was the *yūpa* on the eastern boundary between the *mahāvedi* and the ordinary world), this analogy describes the central sacrificial area, the Main Hall, the *prācīnavaṃśa*, as the battleground between the two armies. In this analogy, the enemy line is on the western side of the Main Hall (at the Wife's Hut), and the sacrificer-king's army is on its eastern side (at the Soma-Cart Shed). The line of fires in the Seat (which stands between the Soma-Cart Shed and the Main Hall) represents the advancing line of the sacrificer-king's soldiers. The Main Hall that stands between these two armies is the area where the three basic fires and the ordinary work and offerings of the basic rite (apart from animal offerings and Soma offerings) take place.

99.36. *the "Wife's Hut": patnīśālā*, where the consecrated wife of a consecrated Soma-sacrificer dwells during the ritual; it is at the back (that is, to the west) of the "Main Hall" (the *śālā*, or *prācīnavaṃśa*) and to the south of the sacrificial compound. This locational detail comes from Stephanie Jamison's *Sacrificed Wife: Sacrificer's Wife* (40).

99.37 (1). *"the Seat": sadas*, a low, oblong enclosure covering a north-south line of six fire-hearths that stands west of the Soma-Cart Shed, between it and the Main Hall. There is a seventh fire-hearth lying outside the the Seat (but still within the *mahāvedi*) at the south end of the line of six hearths, the *mārjālīya* (used to clean utensils and effect purifications). And at the north end of the line, sitting partly in and partly out of the *mahāvedi* is the "Fire-Kindling Shed" (*āgnīdhra*), which houses an eighth hearth used for kindling the fire used to light the other seven in the line. Alone among the eight hearths, this one is actually used for certain offerings (Arthur B. Keith, *The Religion and Philosophy of the Veda and Upanishads*, 328).

99.37 (2). *He who has the enemy army for his wife:* The idea here would seem to depart from the sacrificial metaphor and its spatial analogies. The notion seems to be the psychological idea that as it is his wife, the warrior king will rush to unite with the enemy army closely and intensely. This verse (37cd) is syntactically incomplete.

99.38. *the altar area for a rite:* the *vedi*, which lies on the east-west axis between the *āhavanīya* (ordinary offering-fire) and the *gārhapatya* (cook-fire). It has the hourglass shape of two trapezoids joined narrow-face to narrow-face, and it is the area where utensils, materials, and prepared offerings are placed during the ritual processes.

99.47 (1). Text Amendment: Read *bālam* for *balam*. Belvalkar emended the text here in a complete departure from his usual faithful observance of the principles of the critical edition laid down by Sukthankar. Belvalkar emended the word-stem *bāla*, "child," which is well attested in the best manuscripts of Kashmir and Malabar (the basic principle of the critical edition of the *MBh*), to *bala*, "army," or "strong (person)." Besides being unwarranted in principle, this change makes the verse semantically anomalous. Belvalkar's entire justification is that if the verse was composed to proscribe the killing of old people and children in war it would be an unnecessary platitude ("in battle the question of killing them cannot arise"). He agrees that the verse goes on to proscribe the killing of women and brahmins in warfare, but rightly says that these two kinds of people can represent a different issue (when they are combatants). But the verse obviously intends to proscribe the killing of four typical sorts of noncombatant, and the history of warfare demonstrates that the issue of killing noncombatants is seldom moot. Instead of Belvalkar's text, I read the "difficult reading" *vṛddhaṃ bālaṃ na hantavyam* with the Kashmir tradition, taking these two unusually neuter nouns as abstractions.

99.47 (2). *nor anyone who has filled his mouth with grass:* Submitting by declaring himself a "cow"; the Dharmasūtra of Gautama prohibits killing in war, among others, anyone who declares himself to be a cow or a brahmin. In a note appended to his translation of this passage (10.18) Georg Bühler wrote: "Persons who declare themselves to be cows or Brāhmaṇas

become inviolable on account of the sacred character of the beings they personate. Historical instances are narrated where conquered kings were forced to appear before their victors, holding grass in their mouths or dancing like peacocks in order to save their lives." Unfortunately, he gives no specific information about these incidents. See Georg Bühler, *The Sacred Laws of the Āryas*, pt. 1, 229; vol. 2 of *The Sacred Books of the East.*

100.7. *heroes' giving up their lives:* See 12.65.2–3.

100.9. *in tight ranks: daṃśita,* "fitting tightly (like a suit of armor), standing close to each other" (BR).

101.4. *he may use it to counteract mischief that may occur: pratibādheta cāgatām.* The word *āgatām* must be understood to imply the *nikṛti* of the following stanza, because of the feminine ending. A few variants read *āgatam,* which gives "he may use (the crooked understanding) to counter unforeseen occurrences."

101.6. *and iron "teeth" and mail: śalyakaṅkaṭāni.* The word *kaṅkaṭa* signifies iron mail and *śalya* ("thorn, point, arrowhead") would likely refer to pointed, oblong pieces of iron that would hang in overlapping rows.

101.9. Caitra is the month that occurs across parts of our Gregorian months of April and May and is so named because its full moon occurs in conjunction with a lunar constellation called Citra. Mārgaśīrṣa occurs across parts of our Gregorian months of November and December; it is so named because its full moon occurs when the moon is in the lunar constellation of Mṛgaśiras. The lunar constellations are the *nakṣatras* explained briefly in the endnote at 12.38.30.

101.15. *a place for retreating soldiers to regroup: upanyāso 'pasarpāṇām.* The word *upanyāsa* seems to be a technical term, and in all of epic literature it occurs only three times, all in this chapter in the *MBh.* My translations here and at 101.25 below are based on the apparent threads common to all three instances of the word, but they are very uncertain. Etymologically, this word and its cognates refer often to making some kind of surety deposit. The word *upanyāsa* also frequently refers to some kind of verbal pronouncement (as at Manu 9.31). Of the three instances occurring in this chapter, in the first (here, at 101.15a) and the third (at 101.25e) there seems to be the idea of soldiers returning to military authority from some temporary lapse or relaxation of that authority. The second instance (at 101.25d) is indeterminate, and I have construed 25ef as an explanatory gloss of it. So, in the first case, the word *upanyāsa* would seem to signify something that has been "put down" that compels or urges retreating soldiers to return to their camp, or the place, the rendezvous, for regrouping. In the second and third instances it seems to refer to something soldiers "put down" before roaming "outside" the camp or base, or taking a temporary leave to go home. Is this *upanyāsa* a material surety, is it the soldier's personal belongings left behind, or might it be a verbal pledge, the man's "parole"? Given these considerations and given the basic indeterminacy of the word here, I surmise that the word *upanyāsa* signifies some kind of "pledge to return," or "a ('pledged') rendezvous," or "place of regrouping" (i.e., the place to which the "pledge of return" refers). In the second case (the two instances at 101.25) it would seem to refer to soldiers on temporary leave, who are thus noncombatants. Nīlakaṇṭha and Belvalkar understand the word otherwise.

101.24. *not ready: prakīrṇa.* I leave the translation deliberately ambiguous, for the Sanskrit adjective is ambiguous in this context. It may (and, I think, probably does) refer to the soldiers as individuals and may mean "not fully dressed, disheveled"; but it could conceivably refer to the soldiers as a group and mean "scattered, disorganized." The ambiguity arises because this is not a typical use of the adjective. Typically it refers not directly to persons, as here, but rather to hair or cloth, when it means "flapping, waving," often as an aspect of personal disarray. Also, several times in the *MBh* the adjective describes the waving of banners and flags; and the derivative noun *prakīrṇaka* refers to the hair-tufts that bob and wave as decorations on horses, or that are used for fly-whisks.

101.25 (1). *nor when they have been routed, thoroughly routed, defeated, or are starving:* The first two of these four translate the terms *atikṣipta* and *vyatikṣipta,* which are unique occurrences of these words in the two Sanskrit epics. The *AŚ,* at 8.5.11, describes *atikṣipta* soldiers (one of numerous calamities of the army [*balavyasanāni*] it discusses at 8.5.1 ff.) as soldiers "gone to

more than one realm, because of there being many dangers" (translation of Kangle). These are juxtaposed there to soldiers who have merely retreated (*apasṛta*). The *apasṛta* may fight again some day, while the *atikṣipta* will not.

101.25 (2). *plagued by a pledge to return: upanyāsapratāpita.* See the note to 101.15 above for a basic explanation of the difficult word *upanyāsa.* I take pādas 25ef to be a gloss of 25d, explaining this obscure compound as referring to noncombatant soldiers on leave who have made some kind of pledge to return, either verbal or by pledging something of material value.

102.3. *Ābhīras:* I take the otherwise unknown plural *ābhīravaḥ* as another form of *ābhīrāḥ,* a people of the Indus area. The first three peoples named in the stanza are all from the Indus region of the Northwest of the Indian subcontinental area.

102.9. *deformed legs:* Uncertain; part of the compound *jihmanāsānujaṅghāḥ.* None of the words *a/ānujaṅgha/ā* are attested elsewhere, and I see no specially relevant way to render the most likely candidate, *anujaṅghā.* Nor is it necessary that *jihma* ("crooked") apply to this part of the compound. For want of any better idea, I have elected to construe *anujaṅghā* and to understand that word to be modified by *jihma.* The *jaṅghā* is the lower leg from knee to ankle (one cannot help wonder if the compound *jānu-jaṅghā,* "knee-leg," "knee-bone," might not lurk somewhere in the background of this obscure, but certainly correct, minority reading of the manuscript tradition.

102.16. *Some have curly red hair: dīptasphuṭitakeśāntāḥ.* Normally "blazing brilliantly," *dīpta* means "red" when applied to hair.

103.10. *warriors who have started out: saṃprasthitānām . . . jighāṃsatām.*

103.19. *a herd of deer:* Ganguli is correct, I think, in explaining, "If a single deer takes fright and runs in a particular direction, the whole herd follows it without knowing the cause."

103.26. *one's enemies will go to war every time: pare yogam āyanti sarvaśaḥ.* From early on the concrete senses of the word *yoga*—"hitching up, harnessing, accoutring, putting to work, mustering troops"—apply frequently to going to war. BR records an instance (at *Rām.* 6.116.79) of the accusative *yogam* occurring as the direct object of a verb from the root √*i* (go) and glosses the construction with "acquiesce, give up, comply." The root √*yā* (go) is a close parallel to √*i,* but a careful reading of this śloka in its context rules this construction out here.

103.40. *use and consume: bhoktum,* which is rendered as "use and enjoy" in the next stanza.

104.9. *running his mouth: kaṇṭhāyāsa,* literally "effort of the throat." Nīlakaṇṭha glosses it with "garrulousness" (*mukharatva*).

104.16. *a mixture of clothing: celasaṃsarga.* Belvalkar offers the explanation that the "mutual exchange of clothes, esp. of the headgear, is the traditional method of sealing an inviolable compact of amity."

104.18c. **Text Reading Note:** Read *nayaḥ* for *na yaḥ.* Belvalkar suggested this with a different idea in mind.

104.20. *he will never get the chance again, if he will do only what is Right for a given time: durlabhaḥ sa punaḥ kālaḥ kāladharmacikīrṣuṇā.* That is, for a man who will not violate the exigencies of particular moments of time, never again will the time come when the contemplated course of action will be appropriate. I take *kāladharma* here as a different compound than the one at *MBh* 1.70.46 and 12.31.45. The sense of *kāladharma* here was suggested first, as far as I can tell, by MW, s.v. "*kāladharma*"). Rosalind Lefeber translated it at *Rām.* 4.28.6d (in Goldman, ed., *Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki*) with "what was right for particular occasions."

104.21. *his enemy's reliance on violence: aurjasthya.* This word, a *hapax legomenon,* looks very suspicious on its face; *aurjasya* seems much more likely. It is attested only by the Śāradā manuscript and $K_{2.3}$; note that D_1 is missing here. I construe the text as meaning "that which rests upon *ūrjas* (vigor, strength, might)."

104.34. *Like a dike in a field:* Belvalkar's suggestion to consult another dike simile at *Yogasūtra* 4.3 was helpful here. In pāda d the verb *pra*-√*mad* governs an accusative, *rājyam,* which is a significant departure from the way this verb is normally used.

104.37. *that sixfold army: senā . . . ṣaḍaṅginī.* The usually fourfold army (see above at 103.16 and 104.26) is here said to be sixfold. To the usual four corps of chariots, horses, elephants,

and infantry are added "machines" *(yantras)* here. What the sixth element might be is hard to say. Suggestions from the commentators both here and at *MBh* 5.94.16 include, from Nīlakaṇṭha to the text here, "the kin's treasury and commerce" (*kośa* and *vaṇikpatha*), and (in the fifth book) "supply-wagons and camels" (*śakaṭas* and *uṣṭras*), while a reading Arjunamiśra says is better for pāda c here suggests the possibility of "the king's ministerial corps" *(mantra)*. For an even more complex listing of "the eightfold army," see 121.43–45.

104.39 (1). *operations to ruin things: saṃkarakriyā.* Nīlakaṇṭha mentions poisoning water supplies, and Arjunamiśra and Vimalabodha (in identical comments, quoted perhaps from Devabodha [see Belvalkar's critical note *ad loc.*]) mention that and add "destruction of the 'infrastructure'" (*sādhanahiṃsā*).

104.39 (2). *beyond what is normal: bhūyaḥ prakṛteḥ.* The word *prakṛti* could be understood to refer to the king's ministers, and the proscription would then be "no repeated consideration of the matter with one's ministers." The joint comment of Arjunamiśra and Vimalabodha (see previous note) construes it that way. Normally, however, the plural is usually employed when the word *prakṛti* is used with regard to the king's ministers or the other "elements" of the kingdom.

104.43 (1). *what things must be done: kṛtyān.* A number of Northern manuscripts read the feminine *kṛtyām* here, which refers to spells and sorcery.

104.43 (2). Text Reading Note: Read *anyair atiśāstravedibhiḥ* instead of *anyai ratiśāstravedibhiḥ.*

105.16. *Grieving is good for nothing: śoke na hy asti sāmarthyam;* literally, "there is no ability or capability [on the part of a person, to do or accomplish anything] in (the condition of) grieving"; or, "there is no capacity [for anything (at all) to be done] (when anyone is) in (the condition of) grieving." See 11.1.6 and the accompanying endnote.

105.29. *If you concern yourself only with what is at hand or what comes your way: yathā labdhopapannārthaḥ.*

105.32. *some are highly accomplished at making overly subtle distinctions out of jealousy, and they take great pride in being "A Man": īrṣyāticchedasampannā rājan puruṣamāninaḥ.* I am not sure exactly how this statement (and the follow-up exhortation against "envy," *matsara*, in the next verse) applies to Kṣemadarśa here, if I have understood the initial compound correctly in the first place. (I agree with Belvalkar's suggestion that the sense of the unusual word *aticcheda* is "making too nice distinctions.") Beyond the immediate sense of the verse, I suspect the author intends some criticism for advocates of Sāṃkhya here; the notion of *aticcheda* can refer to the fundamental idea of the Sāṃkhya that one must see a distinction between *puruṣa* and *prakṛti*. The notion of *aticcheda* might also apply to the distinctions in the *bhāvas* of the buddhi that are an important part of the more developed Sāṃkhya. And then, of course, there is the sarcastic expression *puruṣamāninaḥ*, which might well be applied to Sāṃkhya adepts by their rivals.

105.46. *Restrain, hold, concentrate: yaccha, niyaccha, saṃyaccha.* These three verbs refer to successive aspects of the process of yoga meditation. This is an exhortation to take up yoga meditation.

106.1–24. This chapter resembles the sort of loyalty tests described in the *AŚ* at 1.10. See the note above to 12.84.20.

106.3. *you will gain a kingdom or the control of a kingdom: avāpsyasi / rājyaṃ rājyasya mantraṃ vā.* He will either govern a kingdom in his own name, or he will give the decisive advice, *mantra*, that runs the kingdom.

106.10. *smash the* bilva *with a* bilva: Is this a metaphor referring to the culmination of his duplicity with Videha? Does it signify that the surreptitious usurper has now become as hardy and resource-endowed as the ruler he wishes to displace?

107.14. *If he should fight against you:* The point here is that Kṣemadarśa's only way of opposing Videha would be with open warfare in appropriate kṣatriya fashion.

108.6. *I want to hear about the working of tribal federations: gaṇānāṃ vṛttim icchāmi śrotum.* The basic meaning of the word *gaṇa* is "group, count; a mass of similar units," that is, "a herd, a flock, a troop." Here it is used as a technical term describing some kind of sociopolitical entity that is somehow within the king's (here, Yudhiṣṭhira's) purview. Judging from the discussion in this chapter of the *MBh*, gleanings from Pāṇini, and the directly relevant eleventh book of Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra*, we can say that there was an ancient tradition of political thought concerning these *gaṇas* (along with the related word *saṃgha*, "aggregation") whose main focus was the fact that these entities did not have kings. Historians and political theorists of ancient India (working also with evidence from Greek accounts and Buddhist scriptures) have discussed the occurrence and significance of these entities under the general heading of "Ancient Indian Republics" (the first chapter of N. N. Law's *Aspects of Ancient Indian Polity*, esp. 2–11, is a useful review, as is B. N. Saletore's *Ancient Indian Political Thought and Institutions*, pp. 94–130). "Oligarchy" is a denomination for *gaṇa* and *saṃgha* that some settled upon (R. P. Kangle used that word to translate *saṃgha* in the *Arthaśāstra*, and van Buitenen followed that usage in the very first chapter of the *MBh*, where the juxtaposition of "kings" and "great oligarchies [*mahato gaṇāḥ*]" occurs [*MBh* 1.1.84; see van Buitenen, 1: 24]). But while I think "oligarchy" is a generally accurate characterization of a *gaṇa* or a *saṃgha*, the word does not communicate very much to general readers today. Scharfe refers to these entities as "aristocracies" and "republics" (*State in Indian Tradition*, 168, 233–34)—again, terms that seem accurate but too artificial or technical in contemporary English. I have used "tribal federation" as, I hope, a more transparent *terminus technicus.* "Tribal" does the work of "oligarchic" and "aristocratic" by loosely suggesting a group with some kind of natural connection among its members (not limited to common descent), and "federation" brings in the salient theme of this chapter—that the *gaṇa* is a group subject to fission. Readers interested in pursuing this subject further should start with Scharfe's brief discussion of *gaṇas* in the context of the development of state institutions in ancient India.

The term *gaṇa* is used in other works and contexts to refer to other kinds of sociopolitical associations or corporations (e.g., see Manu 3.154 and the different interpretations of *gaṇa* offered by different commentators who are cited by Bühler). This term occurs alongside two others—*kula*, "family, clan," and *śreṇi*, "row, series; herd, multitude; guild, association"—in some of the Dharmaśāstra literature.

108.11. *wasting away until there is nothing left: kṣayavyaya.* I think Nīlakaṇṭha was correct to explain the compound as a *tatpuruṣa* in his gloss at *MBh* 5.70.52. There he explains *vyaya* as the dissipation of one's substance, which is then the cause of *kṣaya*, which he glosses as "death."

108.15. *individual exertions amplified by the power of the aggregate group: saṃghātabalapauruṣāt.* While the opposition of "individual" and "group" is not explicitly indicated, the term *pauruṣa* signifies the same *mānuṣa karman* we saw back at 12.106.20, "human doing," as opposed to "divine doing," *daiva*, "fate." This theme, sometimes using the word *utthāna*, has occurred and recurred in the *ŚP* and is one of the cornerstones of *nītiśāstra*. Thus most, if not all, contexts in which this theme occurs focus upon the individual initiative of an agent, as opposed to a person's taking no action while waiting for marvelous, transhuman, that is "divine," *daiva*, forces to operate for his benefit. On the other hand, the main thread of this passage is arguing the importance of the "aggregation," *saṃghāta*, a term that implies "elements aggregated," though it would not be wise to press such a point too hard. I analyze the compound as *saṃghāta-balena* (a tatpuruṣa meaning "with the strength [that comes] from the group"), complementing *pauruṣa* in another tatpuruṣa ("human exertion [operating] with, or through [and thus, implicitly, made greater or stronger by] the strength of the group").

108.27. Technical Note: *they create a process that effects the complete alienation of the tribe from the federation: gotrasya rājan kurvanti gaṇasaṃbhedakārikām.* The reading of *kārikām* in pāda d hangs by a slender thread of attestation, but it is the good, strong thread of the basic Northwestern mss. and D_1. The difficulty in reading this word in this form dissipates if we simply postulate some underlying feminine noun signifying "a process," such as *pravṛttim* or *gatim*, which is what I have done.

109.6. *the "Head of Household Fire": gārhapatyaḥ.* This fire and the other two named are the three fires necessary for Vedic *śrauta* rites.

109.14. *solemnly: kṛtyayā*, that is, "with a rite."

109.15. This verse resembles 2.145 in Manu, where the first two kinds of teachers (*ācārya* and *upādhyāya*) are inverted.

109.18. *Having done wrong:* The first half of this stanza is very elliptical, and I have read my

understanding of the context into the verse. Nīlakaṇṭha and Belvalkar both bring up the problem of how a king may rightly exempt his parents from punishment. This royal conflict of interest is broadly similar to the dilemma of Rāma in the face of public suspicions about Sītā's virtue in the *Rāmāyaṇa*.

109.19. *he who surrounds a boy's ears with the truth:* A nice description of the powerful enchantment of Vedic instruction. The description occurs with variation, as does the next one, in Yāska's *Nirukta* as part of 2.4. This is a triṣṭubh quatrain that is an interesting variant of an anuṣṭubh stanza, 2.144 in Manu. Again, I segregate this theme with parenthesis because it reasserts what amounts to a countertheme in this passage—the superiority of the teacher to the parents.

109.22. Text Amendment: Read *prītāḥ pitāmahāḥ* for *prītaḥ pitāmahaḥ*. I believe the editor has emended the text without sufficient justification. In pāda b he has discarded the well-attested and difficult reading *pitāmahāḥ* (grandfathers) for the easier *pitāmaha* (grandfather, the Grandfather of the Universe, Brahmā, Prajāpati). I have translated the reading *prītāḥ pitāmahāḥ* of the Kashmir tradition, though its meaning is not clear.

110.0. The theme of this chapter enters into some of the complexities treated explicitly under the heading of "Law in Times of Distress," *āpaddharma*. The following six chapters share aspects of this theme and make up a clearly visible "section" in the collection. See the mapping discussion in the introduction to *The Book of Peace*.

110.4–18. *there is nothing that is higher than the truth . . . :* Many of the verses in this passage also occur in the eighth book of the *MBh* (8.49.21 ff.) as part of an instruction on the subtlety of dharma which Kṛṣṇa delivers to Arjuna as the latter seriously threatens to kill Yudhiṣṭhira! See 8.48–49 and some of the preceding narrative. For those who have access to the Pune text of the *MBh*, here is a list corresponding *ardha-ślokas*, and pādas between the two passages (in this list the equal sign indicates complete identity of all syllables of the two designated units and "var" indicates close similarity but not identity): 12.110.4ab = 8.49.27ab; 5ab = 28ab; 5b = 28d, 29b; 5cd var 29cd; 6ab var 30ab; 6cd = 30cd; 7ab var 31ab; 7cd = 31cd; 8ab var 32ab; 8cd var 32cd; (in the passage in *The Book of Karṇa* Arjuna demands that Kṛṣṇa tell him what he knows about Balāka and Kauśika, so Kṛṣṇa tells the two stories) 10ab var 49cd; 10cd var 50cd; 11ab var 50ab; 11cd = 50cd; 12a var 48c; 12cd var 49ab; 13ab var 51ab; 13d = 50d; 14ab = 51cd; 14cd var 52ab; 15ab = 52cd; 15a = 54c; 16ab = 55ab; 16cd = 55cd; 18a var 53a; 18b = 28b, 28d, 29d.

110.7–8. *Balāka, Kauśika:* The two protagonists in the stories retold by Kṛṣṇa to Arjuna at 8.49.34–46 on the theme that dharma is extremely subtle. Only the second of these two stories pivots on truth-telling. Though he lived the repulsive, unclean life of a hunter, Balāka possessed inner virtues, including truthfulness. One day he killed a beast that was blind. He was rewarded greatly for doing so by the Gods, because the beast was bent upon the destruction of all beings. Kauśika, an ascetic without much learning living at the confluence of several rivers, had sworn always to tell the truth. Once, in the woods, he truthfully pointed out to some cut-throats which way their human quarry had run in the forest. The robbers caught and killed their prey, and Kauśika ended up in a gruesome hell because he failed to understand that dharma actually required him to lie to the villains.

110.13. *When those robbers . . . :* This stanza is clearly a reference to the story of Kauśika mentioned above in śloka 8 and sketched out in my note there, so I have expanded the translation of it slightly to make that connection more plain.

110.14. *If escape is possible:* This śloka looks like a sage aphorism, a *subhāṣita* (a "fine saying") teaching *nīti* (practical strategy and correct policy), and I have translated it as such a general maxim. It would have been possible to read into it the specifics of the Kauśika parable under discussion here and translate it more specifically.

110.17 (1). Technical Note: *It would be better to rob the robbers: varam ādātum icchataḥ.* The reading of *varam* for *dhanam* by the Kaśmīrī tradition with D_1 helps a great deal. Another key to seeing that *icchataḥ* here refers to the same sort of characters as the *jihīrṣantaḥ* in 13a is to interpret 17ab as the final tag to the discussion centering on the Kauśika parable, rather than as connected to 17cdef. Nīlakaṇṭha, Ganguli, and Belvalkar all make the latter connection, and some of the results are extremely convoluted.

110.17 (2). *Those who are witnesses to some matter should speak to establish the definite truth:* This śloka, 110.17cdef, is so directly opposed to what has just been said concerning Kauśika's putative naïveté that it seems to be an interpolation intended to counter the preceding discussion. As the next śloka resumes the theme of permissible falsehood, 17cdef seems even more discontinuous with its environment.

111.21. *honey:* fermented honey.

112.5. *he arrived at supreme disaffection: nirveda,* the psychological precondition for withdrawal from action (*nivṛtti*) and the pursuit of Absolute Escape (*mokṣa*). See 12.6.12 and the accompanying annotation; *nirveda* is one of the main themes of 12.171 in the upcoming *Laws for Gaining Absolute Freedom.*

112.18. *An abundance of coveted privileges and benefits shall be granted to you exclusively: vriyantām īpsitā bhogāḥ parihāryāś ca puṣkalāḥ.* I take the gerundive *parihārya* not predicatively in opposition to *vriyantām* (that is, "some shall be granted you and others must be denied you"), but as an attributive adjective characterizing certain kinds of privileges as "reserved, or exclusive." Transforming the adjective to an adverb is a superficial syntactic adjustment for the sake of the English.

112.35. *You must honor what I say: madīyā mānanīyās te.* The first sense of *madīyā* ("[those that are] mine") to come to mind is "my kind," "my fellow jackals"; but that idea does not really fit with what comes before or after in this story. The word must imply some underlying noun and *vācaḥ*, "words," seems most likely.

112.60. *As that meat was stolen:* I am grateful to Ganguli for seeing the thread that runs through the difficult syntax here.

112.81cd. *has nothing to do with affection:* A very abstract and difficult stanza. The reasoning is, I gather, that affection (*sneha*) is a pleasure that is present only when different beings are commingled, or "fused together" (*śliṣṭaḥ*) with no intrusion of a sense of separateness and the pain attendant upon the transition from "commingled" to "separate." The point of 81ab ("What is separate is commingled only painfully") seems to be the assertion of the connection between pain and the transition between the states of separation and mixture, or fusion.

112.82. *afraid:* Belvalkar's difficult reading of *hi bhītas tu* in pada a occurs only in the Śāradā ms. of Kashmir, but I concur with his selection of it.

113.2. *this one necessary duty: kāryaikaniścayam.* A *niścaya* is a determination or conclusion drawn from the examination of some complex set of possibilities; the word is also used to characterize the resulting knowledge as absolute, "a certainty, a fact," and so forth; here, "the one certainty of duty."

113.17. *the Mind: buddhi.* In order to fit the advice given in the first two and one half pādas of this stanza, the word *buddhi* must here signify more than its typical "intelligence" or "understanding." It seems here to represent the idea of an ontological stratum of a person's being in which intentions and dispositions mingle with cognitive "understandings." The idea of such a stratum becomes very important in the Sāṃkhya-Yoga discourse, and I render this sense with "Mind," or "Higher Mind," when it is necessary to distinguish this stratum from the manas.

114.4. *reeds: vetasa, Calamus rotang,* BR.

114.12. *The king who does not wait out the first violent charge . . . : yo . . . pūrvaṃ na sahate vegam.* The verb root √*sah* is used here in senses generally recorded only for later literature, but only senses such as "yield, wait out, accede to" fit this context, as Ganguli discerned.

115.9. *a perverse ejaculation (normally of semen): niṣekaṃ viparītaṃ sa ācaṣṭe.* It is not entirely clear what is meant here, but I basically agree with Nīlakaṇṭha in thinking that the point is shamelessness. The churl's behavior shamelessly reveals his "bad seed" (what Ganguli, taking his cue from Nīlakaṇṭha, rendered as "bastardy"; Arjunamiśra concurred, in part), just as the peacock shamelessly displays his privates (*kaupīna*, which the commentators gloss as *guhyadeśa*) when dancing.

116.4. *what will serve to please my sons and grandsons:* The reference to what will please sons and grandsons refers to structures and investments which, made in the present, will gratify future generations.

116.13. *A kingdom cannot be ruled by one man alone, Bhārata:* This śloka seems to be Bhīṣma addressing Yudhiṣṭhira, and so it was marked in one manuscript. The majority of mss., it seems, support seeing the change of voice at 14.

116.19. *records office: akṣapaṭalam.* Citing a passage in the *Rājataraṅgiṇī*, BR glosses this compound as a "court." That sense does not seem to fit well here and I have followed R. P. Kangle's understanding in his translation of the *Arthaśāstra*. In a note prior to 2.7.1 in that text, Kangle writes, "According to Cj [the *Cāṇakyaṭīkā* of Bhikṣu Prabhamati; see p. 16 of Kangle's edition of the text] *akṣa* is what is used for counting, such as a pair of scales etc., and *paṭala* is a house. . . . As is clear from the Chapter the *akṣapaṭalam* is a records-cum-audit office."

116.21. *strictly just: śaṅkhalikhitaḥ,* a "Śaṅkha-Likhita king." This characterization of a king derives from the story of King Sudyumna's reluctantly, but fully, punishing the great ascetic Likhita for an offense. The story is told at 12.24, and, interestingly, the king's action, commanded by the ascetic Śaṅkha and demanded by Śaṅkha's brother, the guilty Likhita, becomes a standard of royal justice, one opposed to the recommendations that brahmins should be exempt from royal punishment. Similar invocations of this standard occur at 12.128.29 and 130.15.

117.6. śarabha: A *śarabha* is a fabulous beast, according to Belvalkar (to śloka 36), the highest of beasts in the South Asian menagerie and famed for slaying lions; see Hopkins, *Epic Mythology*, 18–19. Belvalkar refers us to T. A. Gopinath Rao's *Hindu Iconography*, 1: 46, plate E for an illustration.

117.10 (1). *The creature: bhāvaḥ.* This word can be used as *sattva* or *bhūta* to refer to animate creatures, beings, in general, though this is not a common use in the *MBh*. Nīlakaṇṭha takes it to mean "mind" (*cittam*), which strains.

117.10 (2). *but in a human way: manuṣyavat.* Presumably indicating that the dog would prostrate itself reverentially before the holy man, not merely curling up at its master's feet.

117.23. *it rumbled deeply like a thunder-head:* Describing African bull elephants in rut, Cynthia Moss writes, "When a bull comes into musth [a word based ultimately on the usual Sanskrit word for "intoxicated, rutting, etc.," *matta*], . . . [it has] a special vocalization never used by non-musth males or females. It has a low frequency and probably covers a long distance. Even when the bull is nearby the sound seems muted and distant to the human ear" (*Elephant Memories*, 113).

117.24. *with the surliness of rut: madagarvita.* Moss writes further of African bull elephants (see the note to the last stanza) that "the most striking change from non-musth to musth is in the bull's conduct. He becomes extremely aggressive to other bulls and . . . sometimes to human observers as well. . . . Bulls in musth had markedly raised testosterone levels. . . . musth bulls will seriously fight one another" (*Elephant Memories*, 113–14).

117.44. Technical Note: *of the dog species: śvākṛtaḥ,* which is certainly more difficult than the reading *prākṛtaḥ* of most mss. I take *ākṛta* as a rare instance of the past participle of the root √*kṛ* with *ā*-, because it fits the context well and is the most economical interpretation. It seems here to be equivalent to *ākṛti* in the sense of "kind, species" attested in medical literature.

118.1. *The seer buzzed* huṃ *at the evil beast:* Repeated the syllable *huṃ* over and over at him as an aggressive gesture. Recall 12.39.35, where enraged brahmins slew the Rākṣasa Cārvāka by chanting *huṃ* at him.

118.2. *As we see here: evam,* connecting the parable to the dictum given in 2 and 3.

118.14. *able to engineer the places and times suitable to his purposes: deśakālopapādaka.* The context is so very general that I cannot be very confident of this interpretation.

118.19 (1). Technical Note: *in unstintingly making gifts:* Read *dāna-acchede.*

118.19 (2). *whose sense-organs are sound:* A speculative rendering of *sudvāra*. The word *dvāra* signifies "door, gate" and frequently refers to the nine orifices of the body.

119.10. *without affectation": prakṛtija,* "naturally arising."

120.4–16. *Just as a peacock's tail . . . :* Frequently, explicitly and implicitly, subtly and obviously, this chapter compares the ideal king's behavior to the behavior of the peacock. The learned editor S. K. Belvalkar has given a relatively copious commentary on this chapter, and I here acknowledge my grateful dependence upon many of his interpretations of small and large points, of which only the more salient items are remarked in the notes below.

120.5. *indomitability: ādāntyam.* I follow Belvalkar in seeing this word as an abstract noun from the adjective *adānta*, "untamed."

120.6. *Even his very delicate affairs succeed when a king can take on many different forms: bahurūpasya rājño hi sūkṣmo 'py artho na sīdati.*

120.8. *as the peacock does at waterfalls:* I follow Belvalkar in taking *prasravaṇa* as "waterfall," a sense recorded previously only in traditional Sanskrit dictionaries. He writes, "A peacock frequents water-falls but moves cautiously on the slippery ground." Nīlakaṇṭha is strangely silent.

120.10 (1). *vermin: bhāvāni,* equivalent to *bhūtāni;* in accordance with Belvalkar.

120.10 (2). *His wings having grown: jātapakṣa.* See 12.253.29b, 32a, and 50a for a clear indication of the naturalistic use of this term, and see 1.194.3c and 4a for its metaphorical use describing human maturity and immaturity.

120.11. *as the peacock perfects the flowers of the forests:* The whole verse reads *kānaneṣv iva puṣpāṇi barhīvārthān samācaret.* The peacock "works," or "draws" wildflowers to their glorious perfection by displaying the "flowers" of his own glorious tail; or the flowers of his tail provide the perfect culmination to the flowers of the forests.

120.14. *getting trapped in a pen: cārabhūmiṣv abhigamān.* The traditional Sanskrit lexicographers record the previously unobserved meanings of "fetter" and "prison" for *cāra* (though the closely related *cāraka* occurs twice as "prison" in Daṇḍin's *Adventures of Ten Princes*, the *Daśakumāracarita*, Wilson, ed., 53, l. 11 and 85, l. 11). So *cārabhūmi* is some sort of "prison-ground" comparable to a "snare" (*pāśa*). I have no descriptive evidence to corroborate this interpretation. But it seems logical that, as peacocks do not fly far or high, Indian fowlers might have captured peacocks by driving them into some sort of enclosed pen, just as many other animals are captured.

120.15. Text Amendments: Read *bala* for *bāla* in c and *sannivāsyān nivāsayet* for *sannivāsāni vāsayet* in d. These are readings from the best Kaśmīrī mss., and they underlie the translation.

120.16. *If he resembles the peacock always, he may do what his attachments dictate, as he likes:* Normally the king must eschew action based on his attachments (see above, 120.10 and Manu 1.89). The idea here is, if the king absorbs the dispositions and habits of the peacock, his attachments, his predilections, will be ones favorable to his rule.

120.22. *as a drone string on an instrument, when tuned with the proper tension, imitates sympathetically the notes played: anuvarteta svarāṃs tantrīr ivāyatā.* The peculiar idea of a string (*tantrīr*) "following after" (*anuvarteta*) tones makes sense only if we understand the string here as a sympathetic drone string, such as are used on some Indian musical instruments.

120.24. *doing kind and unkind deeds alike:* The king adhering to dharma amidst the numerous pleasant and unpleasant tasks he does is like the sun shining brilliantly amidst the rays that come from it.

120.43. Brahman *dwells in our souls, ever watchful: brahma yattam nivasati dehavatsu.* The phrasing *brahma yattam* is unusual. The participle typically refers to personal agents "being intent" or "watchful, cautious, on guard." I am thankful to John Smith of Cambridge University, who objected to my original interpretation of this phrase and pointed the way to seeing it correctly.

120.51. *and have come under consideration in terms of the six measures of policy: guṇeṣu dṛṣṭān.* It is difficult to know confidently what this phrase might mean, especially in light of *guṇopapannān* in pāda b; I have followed Nīlakaṇṭha's suggestion for *guṇeṣu.*

121.4. *This world . . . is observed to be strongly attached to punishment: dṛśyate lokam āsaktam.* The only way to read 4cd is to take *lokam* as a neuter nominative. Such an occurrence is highly abnormal, and most manuscripts altered the text so *lokam* could be construed normally as a masculine accusative.

121.10. *He by himself is Law: dharma eva sa kevalaḥ.*

121.11–12ab. *Now before this statement was uttered long ago by Manu:* I suspect that 10cdef is an interpolation (one introduced by 10ab, and one which has connections to some later statements that may also be interpolated) which then inspired the rebuttal of 11–12ab. My interpretation of this somewhat difficult passage is not certain. The vulgate text of it varies in some essential ways from the Pune text, so Nīlakaṇṭha and Ganguli are of little help in construing the Pune text. And Belvalkar has offered a speculative interpretation which I find highly improbable. He suggested that the text here means to identify Manu, Vasiṣṭha, and Brahmā, but I can neither believe the text would argue such an equation, nor see the proposed sense of it.

121.14 (1). *four tusks, four arms, eight feet:* It is not clear what the numeric elements of this description might mean beyond conjuring up a frightening monstrosity. Nīlakaṇṭha explains the passage as if its subject, *daṇḍa,* punishment, were a synonym for *vyavahāra,* judicial process, and he explains the numeric elements in terms of various enumerated elements of the judicial process. The ancient Indian discourse on legal procedure developed a voluminous literature that includes a great many numeric listings of various elements. (For an *entrée* into this discourse, consult the section of *HDhŚ* that deals with *Vyavahāra,* namely, vol. 3, chaps. 11–31.) So, as even Nīlakaṇṭha admits, there is uncertainty about the exact meaning of the numbers here.

Nīlakaṇṭha says the "four tusks" refer to the fact that there are four methods of injuring people in this process. He lists these tentatively as ruining a person's reputation, taking his wealth, inflicting bodily injury, and the taking of life. The four arms refer to four ways the process removes wealth: taxing a person's progeny or his creditors; fining a dishonest plaintiff twice the damages alleged; fining a dishonest defendant a sum equal to the amount of the damages; taking all property from a wealthy brahmin who is avaricious. The eight feet, Nīlakaṇṭha says, are eight different types of representations made to courts: denunciation based on a witnessed deed *(āvedana),* denunciation based on a written document, in the presence of the accused *(bhāṣā),* confession of guilt *(sampratipatti),* denial of the charge as false *(mithyā-uttara),* denial of the charge by way of an exculpatory explanation *(kāraṇa-uttara),* answering a charge with the claim that one has been exonerated of the same charge in a previous proceeding *(prāṅnyāya),* posting a bond *(pratibhū),* and proving one's case *(kriyāphalasiddhi).*

121.14 (2). *it has many eyes, sharply pointed ears, and bristling hair:* Nīlakaṇṭha extends his analogical interpretation of the description, saying that "(having) many eyes" refers to the many possible witnesses who may help establish the case. He says further that the "sharply pointed ears," signify that the process hears everything without exception, and the "bristling hair" means "extremely puffed out" *(atyantam utphullaḥ.)* This last attribute must mean, according to our commentator, that the text is saying the process is very solemn, serious, or formal, but Nīlakaṇṭha has become rather terse.

121.15. *The hair on its head is twisted in braids, and it has two tongues, a reddish mouth, and the skin of the king of beasts:* Nīlakaṇṭha says the knotted braids of hair signify that these processes involve many matters of doubt; the two tongues refer to the voices of plaintiff and defendant; and the reddish mouth signifies the fires of a *śrauta* sacrificial rite, though he does not spell out the relevance of this fact. He similarly explains the final attribute, "the skin of the king of beasts," as referring to the hide of a black antelope (it is worth noting that expressions like *mṛgarāja* ordinarily refer to both tigers and lions in the *MBh;* evidently Nīlakaṇṭha has in mind the ancient importance of black antelope skins in the Vedic ritual), and signifies that the procedure is the consecration phase of a sacrificial rite (*dikṣāpradhāno yajñaḥ*).

121.24. *Indeed the rod of force has many embodiments:* This governing statement actually occurs in śloka 32.

121.38. *stand upon a firm base:* I translate *pratiṣṭhante* as an echo of the related and acoustically similar, though in fact rather different, main predicate of the verse just above, "based upon," *pratiṣṭhita.* I believe the author of these verses meant to exploit the similarity.

121.41c. Text Reading Note: Read *balena yaś ca* for *bale nayaśca.*

121.46. *seven basic elements and eight limbs:* For the seven basic elements, see the notes above to 12.57.18 and 59.71. What the eight limbs of the kingdom might be is not known.

121.48 (1). *Another judicial process developed that has its warrant from the king: bhartṛpratyaya utpanno vyavahāras tathāparaḥ.* The word *pratyaya* describes an idea, notion, or thought that "returns" or "recurs"; thus the word means "a clear or definite notion," "a conviction," or "trust or confidence in." It also signifies the idea or belief "to which a person returns," that is, "upon which one relies, or bases oneself," "the warrant for an opinion, process, or action," and "one's basis, motive, reason, or grounds." Here, in 48c, it is the final member of an adjectival compound qualifying *vyavahāra,* judicial procedure, and it is describing the type of procedure that goes forward on the king's initiative.

This passage distinguishes three kinds of *vyavahāra:* that warranted by the Vedas, that warranted by the *śāstras,* and that warranted by the king's obligations and privileges as protector of the realm. The first of these deals with violations of dharma that are subject to expiation (*prāyaścitta*). The second deals with civil disputes between individuals, and the king and his officers can neither initiate these processes nor intervene in them without invitation by one of the parties. The third of these deals with matters of public import, or matters that affect the king and his rule or the security of the kingdom. The king presides over each and administers the punishments for each, but the ultimate warrant or basis for each kind of process is different, and the king's substantive participation in each process varies.

121.48 (2). *the punishment suffered from that process is characterized as having the king's warrant: tasmād yaḥ sahito dṛṣṭo bhartṛpratyayalakṣaṇaḥ.*

122.0. This chapter is broadly parallel to 12.160, which relates the origin of the sword, "the protector of dharma." There are some close parallels from 160.64 ff.

122.3 (1). *Muñjavaṭa:* According to *MBh* 3.81.18 ff., Muñjavaṭa is a pilgrimage site near Kurukṣetra that was "seized" (*āhṛta*) by Rāma Jāmadagnya. It is also known as the Gate of Kurukṣetra. Another pilgrimage site nearby is Samantapañcaka, the five lakes Rāma filled with the blood of the kṣatriyas he repeatedly slew in his vendetta against them. Kuru's Field, also known as "the Progenitor's (Prajāpati's) northern altar" (see the LCP s.v. "Kurukṣetra") seems to embody the idea of kṣatriyas being slain in great numbers while performing the specific dharma of kṣatriyas, namely, war. The slaughter of kṣatriyas at Kurukṣetra depicted in the *MBh* is a slaughter that by design eliminated virtually all mature kṣatriya men from the face of the earth. The nearby Samantapañcaka embodies the idea of the wholesale slaughter of kṣatriyas by the outraged brahmin Rāma.

We have some kind of pairing here of the site near Kurukṣetra and a subordinate peak of Meru in the Himalayas, which Śiva began to frequent after Rāma's possible seizure of it for ascetics (see the next note).

122.3 (2). *Rāma had commanded its seizure for those wearing the ascetics' coiled braids: jaṭāharaṇam ādiśat;* a speculative translation (done in the light of 3.81.19) of an obscure statement. Could this be an allusion to an ancient historical event, such as the Śaiva takeover of the Kanakhala *tīrtha* postulated by Klaus Klostermaier as the basis of the story of Śiva's destruction of the sacrifice of Dakṣa? See his "The Original Dakṣa Saga."

This interconnection between a Himālayan site fashioned by Rāma Jāmadagnya and Kurukṣetra occured once before when Yudhiṣṭhira and his three brothers came to Kurukṣetra toward the end of their *tīrthayātrā.* From their position at Kurukṣetra, their guide Lomaśa, apparently relying upon the same sort of preternatural sensory faculties Yudhiṣṭhira enjoyed once before, on the eastern shore, at the mouth of the River Vaitaraṇī (see *MBh* 3.114.5 ff. and note 8.36 [2] above), pointed out to his charges, among other sites, the "Gate-of Lake-Mānasa," a plateau made by Rāma in the middle of the mountains.

122.34. *[Śiva] is taught in Holy Learning to be "He who holds the lance":* This stanza introduces a different history of the same general matter.

122.39. *to effect the subtle ends of Law: sūkṣmadharmārthakāraṇāt,* an "ablative of respect" that amounts to a statement of purpose, with *-kāraṇāt* for the somewhat more appropriate *-karaṇāt* because of the śloka meter. The subtle "ends of dharma" (*dharmārtha*) are the "holdings" (*dhāraṇa*) of people to what they should do, should eat, and so forth, the "holdings" that form the opposite of the "mixing-up," "confusion" of people (*saṃkara*) that was said to result when the rod of force disappeared. See Wilhelm Halbfass, "Dharma in the Self-Understanding of Traditional Hinduism," esp. 316–19.

123.3. *When people can be cheerful . . . who both begin and end in Time: yadā te syuḥ sumanaso*

lokasaṃsthārthaniścaye/ kālaprabhavasaṃsthāsu sajjante ca trayas tadā. This stanza sets the stage for the following description of the three arthas working in a complementary way: The pursuit of Love sustains and pleasures this body, while the pursuit of Merit through Lawful Deeds guarantees a good body after the death of this one. The successful pursuit of Riches, which is conditioned by Merit, helps secure both the pleasure of this body and the means to perform Lawful Deeds. With the three of these working in such a complementary way, one can accept his or her finitude with good cheer.

123.11. *observing the usual protocols: kṛtvā samayaparyayam.* I agree with Belvalkar's taking *paryaya* to mean simply "the usual course, the usual 'run-through.'" With justification at the level of the words themselves, but ignoring what is most likely in the context, Nīlakaṇṭha interpreted this pregnant expression as "having committed a breach of custom" (*maryādābhaṅgam*). He does not say what the king's rudeness might have been (perhaps initiating questions without having been invited to do so). The summary way the text here refers to the "usual protocols," is a reminder of the fact that the *MBh* often describes the formalities of such meetings in some detail.

123.21. *Habitually performing the required ablutions: udakaśīla,* interpreted according Arjunamiśra's gloss of the term in the parallel passage at 132.13c.

124.26. *who knew the Right thing that had to be done here: dharmajña.* What does dharma really mean here? The only "Lawful, Meritorious Deed" from among the normal brahmin canons of orthoprax behavior that seems relevant here is Śukra's duty to answer truthfully, and he has already fulfilled that obligation. So I infer that dharma here must more abstractly signify the "right thing to do," which, as often too with "laws," is an uncomfortable prescription or proscription. Śukra here refers his divine kṣatriya pupil to his own demon-kṣatriya employer because his employer's knowledge is superior to his own, a referral requiring (presumably painful) honesty and self-effacement on the part of Śukra. It is also the case that this referral contravenes the pragmatic interests (artha) of his employer, for Indra is Prahrāda's rival, as we know from the preceding account. This understanding of dharma more in terms of *śīla* than *karman* (see *dharmasya śīlam* above in 124.1) is thus consistent with all other uses of the word, which always refers to religiously grounded norms that require some sacrifice to carry out, but which are religiously meritorious.

The word *dharmajña* occurs in a similar use shortly below in 32c, where Indra, deceitfully disguised as a brahmin, is questioning Prahrāda about how he earlier managed to overthrow Indra. This second instance resonates ironically with the first (Indra and we in the audience are aware of the difficulty this question would pose for Prahrāda if he knew the identity of his questioner, but of course he does not), but here the dharma of which Indra reminds Prahrāda is simply his Lawful Obligation to answer questions put to him. Indra's own deceit in the matter goes unaddressed.

124.27. **Text Amendment:** Read *śrutvā* for *sṛtvā.* Once again I disagree with Belvalkar's emendation of the text, and I base the translation upon an amendment of his text. The Śāradā manuscript and two other primary Kaśmīri mss. as well as the primary Devanāgarī ms. all read *śrutvā* ("having listened"). This reading is quite intelligible, even if elliptical and somewhat awkward, and I translate this. The two main variants to *śrutvā* are interesting: *gatvā* ("having gone," a widespread Northern corruption) supplies the most obviously missing antecedent, Indra's traveling to Prahrāda, while *stutvā* ("having praised," the universal Southern reading) leaves that idea unstated and, also like *śrutvā,* fleetingly mentions a plausible antecedent to Indra's questioning Prahrāda. The Kaśmīri reading of *śrutvā* is somewhat more obscure than the Southern *stutvā,* and is, thus, the "difficult reading" to be preferred, while the phonetic similarity of *stutvā* and *śrutvā* constitutes a minor argument for preferring *śrutvā* to Belvalkar's postulation of *sṛtvā* ("having gone there").

124.33. *I guide the wise sayings . . . and ride along behind them: kavyāni . . . saṃyacchāmi vahāmi ca.* The metaphor depicts the king riding in a chariot, his reins controlling the horses of his advisors' words. The metaphor is turned around in the next stanza.

125.1. *you have said virtuous habits are the principal thing for a man. How does hope arise, and what is it?* The juxtaposition of the topic of the last lesson, "virtue, good habits, good character" (*śīla*), and the topic of this one, "hope, optimism, expectancy" (*āśā*), is not made clear, though

similar oppositions of enthusiasm and discipline are commonplace in some old manuals of virtue in the West.

125.7 (1). **Technical Note:** *very hard to get hold of it: sudurlabhā.* Nīlakaṇṭha glosses *durlabha* with *durjaya,* "hard to defeat, hard to suppress," which is one way of expressing the sense of *durlabha* that is relevant here. If we see in the root √*labh* here more of √*grah,* "take hold," and less of √*āp,* "get, acquire," then we find it easy to see the underlying unity in the different occurrences of √*durlabha* in this chapter and the next.

125.7 (2). **Technical Note:** *And as to being hard to get hold of: durlabhatvāc ca.* An ablative of respect. We find the same usage (an abstract noun in which the ablative is an ablative of respect rather than of reason or cause) later at 125.31d. Also, I take *tataḥ* in pāda 7d as a neuter used in place of a feminine (*tasyāḥ*) for the sake of the meter.

125.22. **Technical Note:** *"Kind sir": bhadramukha.* This instance seems to be the only occurrence of this form of address in the critical text of either epic. Interestingly, most of the Devanāgarī mss. of the Kaśmīri tradition read *sukha-* in place of *mukha-.*

126.3. *Horse-head: aśvaśiras.* See the *Nārāyaṇīya* (e.g., 12.327.81, 335.53, etc.). But see above at 122.46, where it seems to designate the Sun rather than Viṣṇu. See also 5.97.5.

126.6. *Skinny: tanu.*

126.35. *with regard to the shrinking of things, there isn't anything that is the equal of hope: kṛśatve na samaṃ rājann āśāyā vidyate nṛpa.* (Note that this is the first thing Skinny says to King Manly Force about hope or "shrinking," though Ṛṣabha has reported Skinny's earlier thoughts to Sumitra.) Does Skinny mean to say that there is nothing better than the shrinking of hopes, or that there is no undertaking so formidable, or that there is nothing so crushing? (There are other ways to divide the syllables of 35ab, but Belvalkar's rendering—given above—is best. I owe the last possible interpretation of the question to Nick Murray, the editor of this manuscript.)

126.42. *or in wealthy people without children: tathā . . . dhaninām;* literally, only "of wealthy men, or people." Reading in the idea "childless" may be reaching a bit past the text, but I can see no other sense in "wealthy" here. Obviously the general expectations of wealthy people are not slim at all.

125.49 (1). *that discussion: tataś ca vacanam; tataḥ* used as an ablative of respect referring to the matter discussed.

125.49 (2). *expel this hope right away:* The striking contrast between the interactions of Sumitra and Ṛṣabha, on the one hand, and Vīradyumna and Tanu (Skinny), on the other, will repay reflection. Dharma, disappointed and withered as a result of his petitioning King Manly Force, nonetheless gives the king what he, in his "slim hope," asks. Sumitra did not ask Ṛṣabha for anything, and all he received was the advice to get rid of his slender hope.

127.7. *"I, Dharma": nyamantrayata dharmeṇa kriyatāṃ kim iti bruvan.* The word *dharmeṇa* does not have to be construed as a name standing in apposition to the implicit *mayā,* but that seems the most likely interpretation of it.

128.5. *Law that is obscure: guhyam . . . dharmam.* This final chapter of the anthology of the *Laws for Kings* actually considers a question that comes under the rubric of the next anthology, *The Law in Times of Distress, āpaddharma.* In this anticipatory discussion, Bhīṣma gives a very interesting characterization of the entire topic. He calls the matter obscure, and he labels Yudhiṣṭhira's question as beyond the scope of what he has undertaken to discuss when he calls it (in 7) an *anupraśna,* an "extra question," a "supplemental, or follow-up question."

128.9 (1). *With all courses of action, there can be a conclusive evaluation of it only after one has traversed it: anugamya gatīnāṃ ca sarvāsām eva niścayam.* An important epistemological dictum, which is, of course, basically at odds with the standard outlook of dharma. It does accord reasonably well, however, with the pragmatism enunciated by Kṛṣṇa against his brother Rāma in the angry argument over dharma, artha, and kāma that rages immediately after Bhīma's illicit felling of Duryodhana in the club duel (see *MBh* 9.59).

128.9 (2). *Whatever Learned Tradition a man regularly consults:* A relativizing anthropological observation that attacks any absolutist teaching of dharma and supports the pragmatism of 9ab (see the preceding note).

128.15. *the production of wealth is not all that occurs: dhanasyopapattir ekāntena na vidyate;* "does not occur exclusively."

128.19. *the keen understanding of Law on the part of those who know Law:* I presume this is the same as "the power of discernment" (*vijñānabala*) that is important in 12.130 and 139–40: see the note to 130.3.

128.21. *someone forbidden to offer sacrifices:* That is, someone who by birth (those of śūdra and lower status) or by deeds is excluded from Aryan rites.

128.22 (1). *What is not a proper exit for someone hard pressed? pīḍitasya kim advāram.* The word *advāra* (literally, "non-door") can also be taken to refer to some sort of irregular exit from a place, an escape hatch ("Is there any escape-hatch for one hard pressed?"). I construe the question as a non-rhetorical continuation of the previous question. It might also be construed rhetorically, "Is there *anything* that is not a way out for one hard pressed?"

128.22 (2). Text Amendment: Read *nirvṛtasya* for *nidhṛtasya*. Belvalkar's reading, supported by K_1 alone, is an unattested form from an exceedingly sparse verbal root. It is virtually unintelligible and is best understood as a scribal error. The reading I prefer occurs in most of the rest of the Kaśmīri tradition and is a sufficiently difficult reading to explain the significant variations across the entire corpus of mss.

128.22 (3). *What is a wrong path for one whose desire is extinguished?: (kiṃ) utpatho nirvṛtasya vā;* see note 128.22 (1) above. I take *nirvṛta* here in the sense of someone who has achieved *nirvṛti*, a state of inner perfection characterized by inner quiet, self-control, and seeing all things the same. This interpretation is not certain, but it does enable viable ways of construing the pāda as either a rhetorical question or a straightforward one.

128.23. *The life of begging is not ordained:* An objection—seemingly in a different voice—which appears to be rebutted in the next three stanzas, 24–26, which repeat some of the same ideas stated above in 20–22.

128.24. *If one cannot survive upon any other way of life:* I follow Belvalkar's syntactic path here.

128.28. *who lives off [of the wilderness]: (araṇya-) -samutthasya.* There are two relevant senses of this verb and its derivative nominal words: (1) arise, appear, occur; and (2) work, be active and industrious (probably from the idea of "rising up to do something"). Ascetics are active in the wilderness, and some of their activity is to nourish themselves.

128.29. *a faultless way of life: śaṅkhalikhitāṃ vṛttim;* see the note above to 12.116.21.

128.32. *the king should never conceal his treasury: na kurvītāntaram . . . rājā.* I depart from Nīlakaṇṭha and Belvalkar and take the construction *antaram* √*kṛ* to be essentially the same as *antar*√*dhā*, "conceal."

128.34. *while he knows the discourses of Śibi!:* The virtue of King Śibi is most famous because he offered his own flesh to a hungry hawk rather than give the hawk a dove which had fled to the king's protection. (*MBh* 3.131, van Buitenen, 2: 470–72, is the basic account of the story, which consists largely of a discourse between the hawk [Indra in disguise], the dove [Agni in disguise], and King Śibi. A somewhat different version of the story occurs again in some mss. after Pune 3.190 [App. 1, no. 21, Episode 5, ll. 67–95]; 3.197 in Nīlakaṇṭha's text; 3.196 in the Roy translation.) The relevant point here, however, would seem to be the exchange between Śibi and the hungry hawk, in which Śibi—somewhat in parallel to the ideal stated in 31ab above ("the king preserves the country with floods of material goods during times of distress")—acknowledges an unlimited responsibility to feed the hawk.

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129.2. *when he has had his secrets spilled in every direction: srutamantrasya,* an unnecessary emendation which is not a *lectio difficilior* for the better warranted *śrutamantrasya*. Belvalkar's emended reading also occurs as the constituted text at 12.128.2, where it was attested by three Malayalam mss. and two Northern ones. There, as here, most of the tradition read *śrutamantrasya*, and I believe that reading should have been accepted there as well as here. The ultimate meaning of the two readings is practically the same, so I have not proposed a formal revision of Belvalkar's text.

129.5. *with restrictions on himself:* Nīlakaṇṭha suggests that this phrase refers to the previously suggested (129.4) counterpart of regaining some conquered territory: "by giving up some villages."

130.1 (1). Technical Note: The first verse of this śloka is identical to 12.139.1ab, while the second half matches 139.6ab; and 12.130.2 is a close variant of 139.6cd–7ab.

130.1 (2). *taken over by barbarians: dasyusādbhūta;* literally, "barbarianized."

130.2. *who . . . does not abandon his sons and grandsons?: asaṃtyajan putrapautrān.* If a brahmin is not willing to renounce the world, how can he survive—as a brahmin—under such circumstances? An interesting question coming from the king!

130.3. *one must live by relying upon the power of discernment: vijñānabalam āsthāya.* The "power of discernment," which forms an important theme of this chapter and is the point of 12.139–140, refers to an intelligent brahmin's making fine distinctions and taking account of the exceptions to the rules that allow at least the appearance of reconciling exigency and idealism. Chapters 12.139 and 140 present the story of the brahmin Viśvāmitra's eating dog meat, followed by an explanation of Viśvāmitra's exceptional reasoning to square survival with rectitude. The basic question that runs throughout the current chapter is How should the king understand and deal with behavior by brahmins that is at odds with the generally known ideals of brahmin behavior?

130.6. *who is pure thanks to the power of his discernment: vijñānabalapūtaḥ.*

130.7. *Those whose way of life is justified by resorting to that power of discernment: yeṣāṃ balakṛtā vṛttiḥ.* The word *bala*, "power," in this stanza is a shorthand expression for the compound *vijñānabala* of 3a and 6a.

130.8. *the rule that one finds ready to hand: prakṛtaṃ śāstram.* The ordinary rule as generally applicable and as opposed to the rule understood with the aid of discrimination (that is through the thematic *vijñānabala*, the "power of discernment"). Exercising this power is the "something beyond that" (*uttara*) cultivated by the intelligent man.

130.9. *The king should never vex priests . . . :* Brahmins who live by "the power of their discernment" (7) may appear deviant and unworthy. The king is admonished to leave them alone even so.

130.10. *These are the world's standard, its perennial eye: etat pramāṇaṃ lokasya cakṣur etat sanātanam.* Rather than taking *etat*, "this," as a collective reference to the authorities listed in 9, one could take it as referring to the principle stated in 9: "This [i.e., not vexing brahmins] is a standard principle of people everywhere." Nīlakaṇṭha is silent. This statement appears to explain the admonition of 9, but it opens up further complications: If these men are the world's standard, then whatever behavior they may engage in has some *prima facie* authority. The king and the other members of a given community cannot simply condemn brahmins for what they may believe is a degradation of the ideal. This concern is raised explicitly in the next three stanzas.

130.11. *the king should neither honor nor punish on the basis of what they say:* Brahmins living by "the power of their discernment," that is brahmins who, like Viśvāmitra in 12.139 below, appear to violate the norms that make them brahmins, will provoke resentment among others, which will lead to gossip and the circulation of various rumors and charges.

130.14. *pull it equally together: sama-dhurau.* Ganguli takes the compound as *sa-madhurau*, "sweet-tempered," which seems less likely, on philological grounds. This stanza applies equally well to the prior theme recommending imperviousness to idle criticism and to the next theme that takes up the king's role in administering justice.

130.15 (1). *Some think conduct . . . :* The issue that was implicit in 10 becomes explicit here. By virtue of the author's contrasting this point to the example of Śaṅkha and Likhita (and by virtue of its apparently being labeled "tenderness" or "kindness" in 15e), it would appear that the burden of 15ab is to say that brahmin behavior is always self-validating and never to be

punished. (Recall that King Sudyumna was loathe to punish Likhita [see above, 12.24.16–17]. Although by pardoning Likhita the king was accepting some degree of control and responsibility for his behavior, the king had not initiated the proceeding; in that case the brahmins themselves demanded punishment.) The statement is extremely vague, however, and does not distinguish between the general behavior of a community and that of an individual (the story of Śaṅkha and Likhita focuses upon individual behavior). And because that distinction is not addressed, the assertion that actual conduct is the most important indication of Law does not actually imply that individual brahmins can never be guilty of punishable offenses, though that appears to be the intent of this sentence.

The issue of how Law is ultimately determined and what role actual practice or behavior plays in that determination is a theoretical issue of hermeneutics and logic for brahmin intellectuals. But for the king and the rest of society, the question of brahmin behavior and its relation to Law poses pressing practical problems.

130.15 (2). *the absolutely strict scrupulosity of Śaṅkha and Likhita:* See the note above to 12.116.21.

130.15 (3). *from greed:* With the hope of possessing the property of brahmins expelled.

130.16 (1). *the expulsion of regular wrongdoers: vikarmasthasya yāpanam.* I translate *yāpana* ("causing to go") in a literally etymological way; the term is used in medical literature to express the idea of alleviating some symptom or condition. Bühler, following the commentator Haradatta, renders one of its cognates with the idea "reprimand" at Gautama 2.4.23.

130.16 (2). *regular wrongdoers: vikarmasthasya.* The word *vikarmastha* typically denotes someone following the wrong occupation, an idea especially applicable to brahmins. That sense of the word is very alive in this context, but the scope of the passage does not seem to be limited to that sense of wrong alone, and the word *vikarman* is not so limited either.

130.17. *One who acquires property by some subterfuge:* The final statement of this little section on punishments; it is governed by the opposites "kindness and greed" of 15e. Of course it refers to the king or anyone else using the judicial process falsely to acquire some or all the property of the accused.

130.19. *who knows Law in its fourfold completion: yaś caturguṇasaṃpannaṃ dharmaṃ veda.* Nīlakaṇṭha lists the four aspects of Law as "logic, Veda, economics, and administration of justice (*ānvīkṣikī trayī vārtā daṇḍanītiś ca*)."

131.14. *As the piously observant regard taking things from others, so do barbarians regard harmlessness: yathā sadbhiḥ parādānam ahiṃsā dasyubhis tathā.* The compound *para–ādāna* is ambiguous. I take it as theft (though at 13.13.3—its only other occurrence in the epics—it is juxtaposed to theft) because that enables an interpretation of the entire line. On its face the word could also refer simply to receiving gifts.

132.0. This chapter has both broad and narrow parallels with 12.123. In both there are unusually direct statements about two or more of the *puruṣārthas,* and both end with a general prescription for a king's shedding the evil of his past deeds. See the notes to 132.8 and 11 below for a listing of most of the parallel pādas. I have interpreted and translated each *adhyāya* as a whole unto itself, though I believe a close study of the two together would shed some revealing new light.

132.1 (1). *this definitive statement on doing deeds: karmāntavacanam.* I agree with Belvalkar's suggestion to read *antavacana* (literally, "end-statement") as the equivalent of *niścaya;* regarding this word, see the note to *MBh* 11.1.22.

132.1 (2). *Law and Riches are plain and clear: pratyakṣāv eva dharmārthau.* I take this assertion not to say that Law and Riches are obvious epistemologically (it is known that dharma is not, and the final pāda of the stanza partly makes that point). Rather its point seems to be (as the stanza says next in pāda c) that Law and Riches obviously go together; that the connection between them is what is obvious to the discerning king.

132.2–9. *"This is Law . . .":* This passage is slippery and unclear. Was all of it composed in a single voice, or should we postulate a dialectical exchange for some or all of it? And does it take up only the theme "the two of them should never be separated," or does it address the epistemological issues alluded to in the other parts of that statement? Or should we suspect that our passage joins two or more passages of separate provenance, joined or spliced together

at one time or more, on the basis of one or another perceived connection? My translation takes ślokas 2–5 as a single statement arguing that, though Law is basically unseen, it bears real and important fruit. I then take ślokas 6 and 7 as a later interpolation, for not only do they make an argument that seems to run counter to the complementarity argued above, but 7ef ("There is nothing the strong cannot accomplish, and for the strong nothing is polluting") basically implies that dharma is superfluous.

132.2 (1). *"This is Law," "This is outside Law": adharmo dharma ity etad.* Though the quoted clause is identical to the quoted clause in 12.123.13a, the meaning must be entirely different here.

132.2 (2). *this is just like the track of a wolf: etad yathā vṛkapadaṃ tathā.* What exactly the "wolf-track" allusion signifies is unknown, but the general point seems clear enough: it is a sign that is hard to interpret definitively. The idea probably is that the track of a wolf can often be difficult to distinguish from a dog's track. I prefer this simpler explanation to an explanation Belvalkar quotes from Guṇaratna's commentary on Haribhadrasūri's *Ṣaḍdarśanasamuccaya.* Guṇaratna explains the motif with a story: A man skeptical of brahminism and the knowledge it claimed on matters unseen tried to demonstrate the foolishness of brahmins to his wife, who was sympathetic to brahmin religion. One night, using the fingers of one hand to imitate the pads on the bottom of a wolf's foot, he and she planted a trail of tracks in the dirt of the town's main road. The next morning the town pandits explained to the people that a wolf must have visited the town from the forest in the middle of the night, "because there is no other explanation."

132.7 (1). Technical Note: *Law is power for a weak man: anīśvare balaṃ dharmaḥ.* The locative *anīśvare* hangs by the most slender thread of attestation (the nominative, in the form *anīśvaro,* is almost universally read; that yields the very smooth "Law, which is weak, depends upon power . . .), but it is probably correct. Arjunamiśra read the locative too but construed the meaning to be "In people who are weak Law depends upon power as a creeper depends upon a tree." My interpretation follows the lead of Belvalkar over Arjunamiśra.

132.7 (2). *nothing is polluting: sarvaṃ . . . śuci;* literally, "everything is clean (for those with power)," but the positive form of the statement does not make the point immediately in English.

132.8. *But a wicked man:* This śloka is similar to 12.123.16 in thought and word. 9ab is virtually the same as 123.18ab, and 9cd has some similarities with 123.18cd.

132.11 Technical Note: *On this subject:* This verse (11ab) is a very close variant of 12.123.19ab, and 11cd is almost identical in thought, though not in word, to 123.19cd. Śloka 12ab is identical to 123.22ab; 12cd is close to 123.20ab; 13ab is the same as 123.22cd; 13c is the same as 123.21a; 14ab is close to 123.21cd; and 15ab is the same as 123.23ab. In both *adhyāyas* the surrounding context is very similar: a general statement on getting rid of one's past evil (as opposed to a precise statement of specific *prāyaścitta*).

132.14. *he should betake himself to the brahmin Order and the kṣatriya Order: brahmakṣatraṃ saṃpraviśet.* I do not know what this might mean, and the next line describing criticism of him for doing so does not help. The parallel, 12.123.21cd, is clear.

134.5c. Technical Note: *pointless:* Belvalkar reads *ānantikām,* which is attested only by the fundamental manuscript, Śāradā$_1$. I accept Belvalkar's reading here and translate it according to his interpretation. I think the reading is the correct one, but I am myself at a loss to understand exactly what it means. Most manuscripts substitute the much more natural *arth-* for the difficult *ant-* in the position of the second syllable of 5cd. That substitution gives the expected sense of "pointless" directly. Belvalkar interprets his reading, *ānantikām,* to mean "pointless," but I am not sure how he derives this from a word that literally means "without limit, without end, without terminal boundary." The word *anta,* "end," does not typically get used in the sense of *telos,* as English "end" does. Of course *telos is* a basic sense of artha.

134.9. Text Amendment: *stinging ants:* Read *caṇḍapipīlikam* for *cāṇḍapipīlikam.* Belvalkar's reading is not well attested in the better manuscripts, while the reading I have adopted is. Belvalkar's reading imports the concept of "egg" (*aṇḍa*) into the text, whereas the plainer *caṇḍapipīlikam* would simply refer to some kind of aggressive stinging or biting ant that is thus very annoying.

135.0. This story and the next one are also found in the Indian fable literature devoted to the pragmatics of statecraft, the *Pañcatantra* and the *Hitopadeśa.*

135.13. *and swallowed a piece of the line: agrasat.* A comment from Adam Bowles (personal communication) helped me see the simplicity of the syntax here.

135.20. *Minutes, seconds, hours, days . . . and years:* The actual units of the *MBh* here are only approximately the same as those used in the contemporary West. According to the most common reckoning of time in the *MBh* there are in one day (and night) 30 "hours" (*muhūrta-s*) of 30 "minutes" (*kalā-s*) each; that is, 900 "minutes" (in comparison to our 1,440) of 30 "seconds" (*kāṣṭhā-s*) each, and so 27,000 "seconds" (in comparison to our 84,400). So the *MBh*'s "hours" are 20 percent shorter than ours, its "minutes" 50 percent longer, and its "seconds" three times as long as ours. Because their "second" is so long, the *MBh*'s reckoners of time typically resolve it into a lower unit, "split-seconds": Fifteen or eighteen *nimeṣa-s* [literally "blinks of the eye]," or many *lava-s* ["bits"], or *truṭi-s* ["specks"]). "Instants" here renders *kṣaṇa-s*, which, as often, signifies a single moment or instant of time, nowhere specified relationally in the *MBh*. See *MBh* 12.224.12 ff. for a slightly different ratio of the units; and see Manu 1.64 for a parallel passage.

The word *muhūrta*, "hour" here, has an earlier and less technical sense of a short period of time, a moment. Most often that is the sense of the word that is relevant. It signifies "hour" only occasionally.

136.0. This chapter contains one of the *MBh*'s numerous long dialogues on matters of policy (*nīti*). At 426 lines in length, this *adhyāya* alone makes up over one-eighth of the bulk of the *ADh's* 3280 lines.

136.13 (1). *Through the application of people's different capabilities in different projects: sāmarthyayogāt kāryāṇām.*

136.13 (2). *with changes in these there is always further change: tadgatyā hi sadā gatiḥ.*

136.22. *a cat . . . had lived happily in the tree's branches, a nemesis of the birds:* Of all the cats and civets described in Prater's *Indian Book of Animals*, the "Common Palm Civet" (92–93) comes closest to the *mārjāra* described in this story. It is more arboreal than most of the other candidates, widely distributed in the subcontinent, and preys upon birds and ground-animals alike.

136.30. *the God of war: śaraprasūna*, "reed-born," that is, Skanda, who was born in a clump of reeds. See the note above to 12.23.18.

136.53 (1). *this yelping mongoose, this hooting owl: kūjaṃś capalanetro 'yaṃ kauśikaḥ*, a *śleṣa*, where a phrase or sentence carries two meanings simultaneously. The word *kauśika* means both owl and mongoose (this latter meaning of the word was previously given in traditional Sanskrit lexica but was unattested in literature), and the mouse means to say that each animal is eyeing him. The adjectives *kūjaṃś capalanetraḥ* have slightly different connotations in each case (see the two following notes).

136.53 (2). *this yelping mongoose: kūjan . . . kauśikaḥ.* Perhaps the "Common Mongoose," *Herpestes edwardsi* (Geoffroy), appears in this story, or it could be the "Small Indian Mongoose," *Herpestes* auropunctatus (Hodgson); see Prater, *Book of Indian Animals*, 96–105. According to Prater, "Little is known about means of communication among these animals. The Common Mongoose gives out a hoarse mew, and calls to its young when they stray by yelping querulously" (105). The Sanskrit root √*kūj*, *kūjati*, signifies "to make any inarticulate or monotonous sound" (MW), and "yelping" seems plausible for a mongoose (a famously aggressive and ferocious killer) that has treed its prey. When applied to the owl the participle obviously refers to its hooting.

136.53 (3). *with quickly darting eyes:* What does this description mean for either of these animals in the dark of night? This adjective must refer in both cases to the glimmers and gleams of light reflected from the eyes of both animals as their eyes moved. We must bear in mind that owls can move their eyes only very little within their heads; that any movement of their eyes, besides blinking, is accomplished by moving the head; and that their movement of their heads independently of the rest of their body has a remarkable latitude and freedom.

136.61. **Technical Note:** *a sure escape: sunistara* for *sunistāra* to save the meter.

136.86 (1). *"the dirty dog-eating Caṇḍāla": śvapaca;* literally, "dog-cooker," synonymous here and in nearby episodes with Caṇḍāla, for a tribal people regarded by brahminic society as extremely low, dirty, and polluting; an early paradigm of peoples who will later be regarded as "untouchable." See the stylized descriptions of a Caṇḍāla below at 136.109 f., of a hamlet of *śvapaca* Caṇḍālas below at 12.139.27–30 and of a sleeping Caṇḍāla man at 12.139.42 and 45–46.

136.86 (2). *"O slayer of your enemies":* Ambiguous. Does the cat address this to the mouse? Or is it Bhīṣma addressing Yudhiṣṭhira? Readers may have noted the aside, "king," just above in stanza 83, the first such address to Yudhiṣṭhira by Bhīṣma in a very long while. That strengthens the idea that the brief pause here is addressed to Yudhiṣṭhira. On the other hand, it may be the author's sense of humor to put such arch irony into the cat's mouth here.

136.112–14. *The mongoose and the owl:* This feature of the story already occurred at stanza 82. Almost all manuscripts contain both passages, so the editor was quite correct to retain both in the critical edition.

136.161. *"Supposedly to lead to my happiness, supposedly involving no risk to me": nūnaṃ sukhopāyam asaṃśayam.* The syntax is somewhat awkward here as 136.141d is quoted. In the original context these adjectives modified the word "service" (*kṛtya*), and there was an implicit *mahyam* ("for me"). I have brought these two ideas forward from 141 along with the quoted adjectives, though I have not rendered them slavishly in the English. The use of *nūnam* to refer to someone else's representations of certainty (whether ironically, as here, or not), is not one of the uses of this particle noted by Emeneau in his "Sanskrit Syntactic Particles—*Kila, Khalu, Nūnam*."

136.202. *those who comprehend the matter: āspadadarśiṣu.* The word *āspada* is a form of *pada*, here meaning "business, affair, matter." Belvalkar adds into it the notion "safe," translating "haven of safety."

137.19. *it does not take its effect upon him: na tasmin yadi vidyate.*

137.22. *someone against whom he has committed hostilities: kṛtavaire.* The word *kṛtavaira* is often used in the sense of "bitter foe." But here and below at 40a a more literal rendering is necessary.

137.26. *"a friend always has a wet hand": klinnapāṇir vayasyaḥ.* See the note to 12.84.6.

137.40. *like the fire that is concealed in wood:* Fire is one of the elemental substances, and it does not merely come and go from the co-occurrence of particular things under particular circumstances. Since fire can be kindled from plants, then fire must already be in the plant and kindling merely makes it appear.

137.41. *Aurva's fire:* The fire of the Bhārgava seer Aurva's anger, which was originally kindled against malicious kṣatriyas descended from Arjuna Kārtavīrya, but which was later directed against the entire world. Aurva was persuaded to divert this fire into the ocean. See *MBh* 1.169–72 for the story.

137.52. *If it is Time that causes beings to develop to their ends: yadi kālena pacyante.*

137.67. *as those believing there is honey . . . : madhu śuṣkatṛṇair yathā.* I interpret this elliptical and initially obscure comparison in general accordance with Nīlakaṇṭha's commentary: "Their enemy has shown them where there is honey nearby so that they, believing what he said, will fall into a pit covered with stalks of dried grass." Pāda d indicates the metaphor simply by mentioning an explicit term of comparison, the object of credulity, honey, and the bad outcome specific to the honey-trap.

137.69. *it's like a filled pot . . . :* The king is a rock, his dupe is the pot, his compliments and promises are what fills the pot up, trusting his blandishments results in pulverizing contact with his hardness.

137.72. *But if he runs . . . they hurt:* The point of this stanza, and of the six following it, seems to be that human beings, often acting in difficult circumstances, should exercise sound judgment and avoid transforming the difficult into the fatal through bad judgment. Trusting one's enemy would be one such bad judgment. On the other hand, the advice given below in stanza 80 seems to conflict with these examples.

137.85 (1). **Text Amendment:** Read *māghamāsegavā iva* for *māghamā segavām iva.* The same simile occurs at *MBh* 6.114.60b, where Belvalkar chose the same reading that he did here. In both cases Belvalkar's readings are those most widely attested and best warranted by the editorial principles of the critical edition, including the fundamental principle of choosing

the *lectio difficilior*, but I do not think his reading can be successfully construed in either case. After a study of the various commentators (the word *māghamā* is unknown outside these two instances, and *segava* is virtually so), and basically following the lead of Arjunamiśra, I construe the pāda as a simile depending upon a *dvaṃdva* compound used to indicate some proverbial relationship: that is, "like the crab and her offspring [i.e., as baby, that is, molting, crabs split or sunder their "mother"]." Arjunamiśra, reading the text *māghamāsegavā iva*, explains what is meant in terms of the exoskeletal molting of scorpions: "Scorpion offspring destroy the mother scorpion. Residing in her belly, they get outside of her by splitting her back open." In both contexts this molting simile fits and complements the main text of the ślokas (see the next note for an explanation of the contexts and the content of the simile).

137.85 (2). *the way young crabs split the bodies of their mothers: māghamāsegavā iva;* see the preceding note for the amended reading. As I said above, the simile is based on the molting process of many arthropods (including crabs and scorpions), and that simile aptly fits both this passage and 6.114.60, because in both the supposedly inferior person (here a man's wife, there Bhīṣma's "grandson" Arjuna) is said to cause the death of the supposedly superior man. In Book 6, the simile forms part of Bhīṣma's powerful recitative that the arrows racking his body do not come from Śikhaṇḍin (6.114.55–59). Śloka 60, the final one of this series, contains this simile and states that the arrows are Arjuna's: "They (these arrows) tear my limbs asunder the way young crabs split the bodies of their mothers; they are Arjuna's arrows, they are not Śikhaṇḍin's arrows." The simile not only reinforces the dreadful physical facts of Bhīṣma's wounds, it intones the idea of the young coming to life through the slaying of their parents. At 12.137.85, the same simile fits the point of the shrewish wife devouring her husband's flesh, though it does so only in a more abstract way. (Arjunamiśra's gloss of *māghamā* [consistently spelled *māgamā* in his note to 6.114.60, which is quoted in the apparatus to that śloka] as "scorpion" [*vṛścikī*] suggests an even more apt idea for 12.137.85, in that male scorpions, like their cousins the spiders, are often devoured by the female after delivering sperm to her. But there is no way to read that meaning here without construing *segava* in some way different from the gloss "her offspring" [*tadapatyāni*] given by Arjunamiśra, Vādirāja, and Nīlakaṇṭha at 6.114.60 and by Nīlakaṇṭha here.)

137.86. *"My house . . .":* Ślokas 85 and 86 both seem borrowed from some context justifying leaving home (presumably to pursue *mokṣa*), but used here to support Adorable's argument that she must leave.

137.93. *it is not just some personal tie of his own: na caiva hy abhisaṃbandhaḥ.* The word *abhisaṃbandha* (connection, tie) is too vague by itself to be clear. I follow Belvalkar's plausible suggestion.

137.97. *does not do exactly what that calls for: na tatpramāṇam kurute yathāvat;* literally, "does not act according to that standard."

138.4 (1). *the Sauvīras:* A people from the Indus region to the northwest of Bharatavarṣa.

138.4 (2). *Kaṇiṅka:* Neither of the names Kaṇiṅka or Bharadvāja occurs again in this chapter, and the discrepancy of the names is unresolvable. Many manuscripts tried to resolve the conflict by changing Bharadvāja to Bhāradvāja, "descendant of Bharadvāja," which could be imagined to be applicable to Kaṇiṅka. A sage Kaṇika is known in the vulgate tradition of *The Book of the Beginning* in the *MBh* (but not in the critical edition) as a minister of Dhṛtarāṣṭra. See 1.140 of the vulgate, in which Kaṇika delivered the advice given here to Dhṛtarāṣṭra.

138.19. *resinous ebony: tinduka, Diospyros embryopteris* Pers., according to BR, but it might just as well refer to more common south Asian ebony trees, such as *Diospyros ebenum*, the black heartwood of which is "streaked with brown [and] contains fibres filled with a hard gum that makes it heavy enough to sink in water," *EBCD*, s.v. "Ebenales." One should put out a smoke-screen; be obscure not plain. Loosely packed straw burns rapidly with a virtually invisible flame and little smoke; the king should burn like dense ebony charcoal, giving off thick, black smoke.

138.21. *the particular points of excellence of the cuckoo . . . and of an actor:* Arjunamiśra, quoted by Belvalkar in his critical notes (and writing identically to Vimalabodha, who preceded him by two to three hundred years, according to Belvalkar [see *Jñānadīpikā*, 1]), lists the particular virtues of these six beings or things: "the cuckoo—sweet voice and good luck; the boar—superior hearing and aggressiveness within his enemy's territory; Mount Meru—being naturally higher than everything; an empty house—it is a resting place for all, impartiality toward all; of a [here, instead of *vyāḍa*, "beast of prey," Arjunamiśra reads *vyāla*] serpent—it attacks the weak spots of tigers and is the cause of fear; and of an actor—he wears many different guises and behaves in many different ways." Vādirāja and Nīlakaṇṭha, also quoted in the same place, have similar things to say.

138.27 (1). *He should turn his bow into a stalk of grass and he should sleep the sleep of his prey: kuryāt tṛṇamayaṃ cāpam śayīta mṛgaśāyikām.* Pāda a uses the expression "turn his bow into grass," an idea used a number of times in the *MBh* to signify "treat unseriously" (see *MBh* 1.180.2, 3.221.73, 5.148.11, 7.107.15, and 116.14). I follow the gist of Nīlakaṇṭha's explanation (given at B. 1.140.13). I think he is right to see this half-śloka as recommending that the king pretend to abandon the ways of a warrior (thus, Nīlakaṇṭha glosses, "he should make his bow grass" signifies "he should make his bow useless, as if it were grass") to lull his enemy into dropping his defenses, the way a hunter feigns "sleep" to take game unawares. Belvalkar rejects Nīlakaṇṭha and suggests the literal sense "hide your bow beneath the grass," which I do not think is a plausible rendering of *tṛṇamaya*.

138.27 (2). *he should sleep the sleep of his prey:* I agree with Nīlakaṇṭha (see the previous note) that the half-śloka (actually all four pādas) recommends deceit. Were this pāda to be construed without connection to the immediate context of deceit, it could be read simply to mean "he should sleep cautiously like the deer," which is Ganguli's translation.

138.30. *like a mule with a foal in her belly: sa mṛtyum upagūhyāste garbham aśvatarī yathā.* Arjunamiśra and Nīlakaṇṭha both say, in the same words, "It is generally known that the she-mule, a mare born of a donkey, gives birth only by having her belly split open."

138.31. *"The tree with many flowers . . .":* I take these four statements to be examples of arousing the hopes of one's enemy and then confusing and thwarting his motivation, as outlined in 138.32. Nīlakaṇṭha has nothing to say about these verses here, but at B. 1.140.68 he suggests that the motives for these statements are exactly those actions that 138.32 specifies: "Let him make him imagine a fruit, or benefit, and then let him pose an obstacle to his gaining it." In Nīlakaṇṭha's text in Book 1, the śloka corresponding to 138.32 here does not occur for another twenty ślokas (1.140.88).

138.38. *and if he is able, it should be a Lawful act he does: samartho dharmam ācaret;* most literally, "One who is able should do dharma." I take this statement as allowing one to do deeds that are not dharma, to resolve one's malaise. The deed need not be dharma, if one is not able (*samartha*). This śloka is closely connected in wording as well as thought to 12.139.59.

138.39. *He should baby . . . : apavatsayet;* evidently a denominative from *vatsa*, "calf" (so Belvalkar). A difficult reading found only in some Kaśmīri manuscripts. The preverb *apa-* is difficult to account for (and my translation basically ignores it, giving only the root meaning); Belvalkar's speculation about the calf presumed by the verb being a recently weaned calf (thus taking *apa-* as suggesting an ambivalent relationship) seems contrived.

138.42ab. *Spies are wicked men who offend against Law:* On its face this verse looks like an interpolated editorial comment. Even if we assume the subject of these two stanzas (41–42) is one's enemy's spies, the notion of "offending against dharma" is incongruous in this *nīti* environment.

138.49. *Like a bird with a sharp beak . . . :* I follow Belvalkar's interpretation of *puṣkala* here as being a measure of grain, an indication of relative abundance. He also suggests there is a *śleṣa*, a phrase or sentence with two parallel meanings, here. If he is right, we should understand the bird to peck at grain from its keeper, preceded by flying up and greeting its keeper and, perhaps, performing some trick or giving something to its keeper as a request for its grain. Far from being a pet bird, though, the king is eating away his enemy's substance.

138.51. *No one is one's enemy by birth . . . :* Identical to 12.136.132. See also 12.136.13.

138.56 (1). *one should not swim across a river:* The general point of these admonitions seems to be, "Don't waste any energy or resources."

138.56 (2). *The eating of cowhorns . . . :* There may be more to this puzzling idea than appears on the surface, but since the idea seems to be unknown in prior and collateral literature, I take it as one more example of vain exertion (see the first note on this śloka). Nīlakaṇṭha takes it this way too, but he does not take the words merely as extravagant hyperbole. He suggests

that a king might actually chew on a cow's horn if he has been told, "This is your enemy's cow" (apparently as some technique of sympathetic magic): "'The eating of cowhorns . . . :' When someone is chewing on a cow's horn because he has been told, 'This is your enemy's cow,' his exertions are pointless. The point is similar to that of the prior half-śloka."

138.57. *"Within the group of three . . .":* As is often the case the thought is too general to understand well. Regarding the three kinds of "harm," Nīlakaṇṭha (who understands *pīḍā* more as "constraint" or "countervailing pressure") says, "The pressure against Success is from Law, the pressure against Law is from [the degree of one's] Success [i.e., the amount of one's wealth], and the pressure against Pleasure [living "the good life"] is from both the other two." Vādirāja, on the other hand, says that each kind of interest is subject to three problems: Non-attainment; not keeping what has been attained; and destruction, in the end, of what has been retained. Concerning the "linkages" *(anubandha-s)*, Nīlakaṇṭha understands them as the respective fruits or benefits of each activity: Law produces purification of the mind, Success yields the worship of the Gods with the sacrificial rites, and Pleasure yields life.

138.62. *with the activity-level of the dog:* Nīlakaṇṭha suggests that "activity-level" here refers to the dog's vigilance. But the author did describe aspects of vigilance by his three references to birds and would likely have been specific about it with the dog as well. I imagine the canine's "dogged" pursuit and defensiveness is more what the author meant by *ceṣṭā*, "activity, performance, exertion."

139.1. *When the most meritorious forms of Law are not available:* The first verse of this śloka is identical to 12.130.1ab; but, interestingly, 130.1cd and 130.2 are matched by 139.6–7ab.

139.7. *to quit his sons and grandsons:* That is, without renouncing the world, or, less likely, leaving upon the "final journey" (i.e., leaving his family and quitting life). See the note to 12.130.2 above.

139.11. *his powers of discernment: vijñānabala.* See the note above at 12.130.3.

139.27. *somewhere in the forest:* This description echoes that of Manu at 10.52.

139.37cd. *as it goes . . . : paraṃ paraṃ bhavet pūrvam asteyam iti niścayaḥ.* Because the principle enunciated here is contradicted in the next śloka (when it allows stealing even from a superior), a number of Northern manuscripts, including the vulgate tradition, changed the line to read "a seer [i.e., a brahmin] must do it (the stealing which is ordained [from 37a]) in order to preserve his life" (*vipreṇa prāṇarakṣārthaṃ kartavyam iti niścayaḥ*).

139.39. *those at the bottom of society: antāvasāna.* Sometimes this compound (which has several variant forms) is understood to mean "living at the edge of the main community," which is often true as well of those at the bottom of the social hierarchy.

139.47. *I will take a dog's hind end: hariṣyāmi śvajāghanīm.* The somewhat rude tone of "hind end" is, I think, deliberately intended by the author's use of *śvajāghanī*. Ganguli's "haunch of dog's meat" is, I think, too mild. Perhaps even something more vulgar than "hind end" would be appropriate.

139.53. *haunch and hind end: ūrujāghanī.*

139.56. *you are the final knower of the Law: tvaṃ hi dharmavid uttamaḥ.* The Caṇḍāla is not praising Viśvāmitra's personal wisdom, but referring to the fact that as a brahmin, he is society's last resort for knowing what dharma is.

139.57–87. *the starving seer Viśvāmitra answered him again:* The speech that follows is an example of the *vijñānabala*, the "power of discernment," that was introduced at 12.130.3 and 6 and mentioned in this chapter at 139.11 (see the note to 12.130.3).

139.59. *if he is able:* A śloka closely connected to 12.138.38. See the note to it above.

139.61. *willingly: apīḍayā.*

139.66. *the five five-clawed animals:* The first verse of this stanza and *Rām.* 4.17.34ab are variants of each other. The *Rām.* goes on to list five animals, "the hedgehog, the porcupine, the lizard, the rabbit, and fifth, the turtle." The translations are those of Rosalind Lafeber (*Rām.*, 4: 90), and her note to this passage (ibid., 239) discusses the identities of these animals. Manu 5.17–18, also referring to "five-clawed" animals, lists these same five and a sixth, the *khaḍga*, conventionally "rhinoceros," as a sixth such animal permissible to eat. Earlier statements of the rule are found at Āpastamba 1.5.17.37, Gautama 2.8.27, and

Vāsiṣṭha 14.39–40. For a discussion of the list and the addition of the rhinoceros to it, see Stephanie Jamison's "Rhinoceros Toes."

139.71. *I judge dog and deer to be the same:* This allusion to seers and the eating of deer would seem to broaden Viśvāmitra's reference to past exemplars. Or, perhaps we should read pāda c, "I judge dog and deer to be the same," as a separate rationalization, rather than a reference to the behavior of ancient seers.

139.73. *I have no fear of such cruelties: nṛśaṃsānām īdṛśānāṃ na bibhye;* evidently a reference to the consequences listed by the Caṇḍāla back in 139.64, and an allusion to Viśvāmitra's kṣatriya origin.

139.75 (1). *or maybe all the consequences of one's deeds just disappear: karmāṇāṃ vā vināśaḥ.*

139.75 (2). Text Amendment: I reject Belvalkar's emendation in pāda c. Where Belvalkar reads *ahaṃ punar varta ity āśayātmā*, I accept the reading of the best Kaśmīri and all the Keralese mss. used for the Pune edition (and many other mss. as well): *ahaṃ punar vratanityāśayātmā*. Belvalkar's *vart(e) ity* is an emendation, completely unattested except for one Keralese manuscript not included in the apparatus of the critical edition. In my judgment his emendation is an obvious *lectio facilior* which the tradition would not have discarded with virtually no trace had it been present in the ancient tradition.

139.75 (3). *But I do have a body that always forms the basis of my doing pious deeds: ahaṃ punar vratanityāśayātmā* (see the Text Amendment just above). As in 73, *ātman* is used in the sense of body. The word *āśaya* can refer to the psychic seat of volition, and can also designate the receptacle of one's past deeds, but it seems clear, contra Belvalkar, that the body alone is the point of this sentence. If deeds do count in existence beyond death, one's body is a prerequisite to doing them.

139.75 (4). *I will . . . eat the forbidden food:* Determining the exact sense of the four verses of this stanza is difficult; pāda c is especially difficult as I read it (see the Text Amendment above). Paraphrase: "Yes there is some risk as to the next life; or maybe our deeds do not really persist into the future. Be that as it may be, I *do*, though, have this body which I do know is always the basis (*āśaya*) of any pious deeds (*vratas*) I do (whatever good they may do me), so I will preserve it."

139.76. *I am satisfied:* Another difficult stanza. Viśvāmitra is asserting that the food he will put into his body cannot really affect his spirit. So even if he is wrong to eat the dog-flesh, he will not, by that act, become a dog-eating Caṇḍāla.

139.79. *Do not eat:* I take *ādithāḥ* as a reduplicated aorist stem from *√ad, atti* ("eat"). I do not know what his authority is, but Whitney (*Roots*) lists *ādidat* as a reduplicated aorist form of *√ad.* If my classification here is correct, the stem was truncated here to *ādi-* because of the meter, and the augment was retained for the same reason (in spite of the *mā*).

139.84. *that makes it allowable food: bhakṣyakriyā;* the *abhakṣya* is made (*kṛta*) *bhakṣya.*

139.85. *O Indra among brahmins:* An unusual expression; another allusion to Viśvāmitra's kṣatriya origin.

140.5. *Laws derived by means of intelligent insights: buddhisaṃjananam . . . dharmam.* Essentially the same theme as *vijñānabala*, "the power of discernment," discussed above in the note to 130.3, and the "understanding" invoked just above in 139.93–94. See the comments on buddhi in the notes to 11.1.36–37.

140.11. *The enemies of Law steal the Learned Teachings:* This entire *adhyāya* is an attack upon traditionalist approaches to determining dharma. This śloka and the six following it attack orthodox teachers for a complete lack of understanding of practical matters *(arthavidyānāṃ nairarthyāt)*, hypocrisy, and so on.

140.15. Text Reading Note: *Having taken a mouthful of metal blades for words:* Read *vākchurīm attvā* for *vākchurīmattvā*. The gerund *attvā* of the root *√ad, atti* ("eat") is very little attested (see A. M. Ghatage, *An Encyclopaedic Dictionary of Sanskrit on Historical Principles*, 2: 1227), but this must be an instance of it. The great Pune dictionary did not record this instance of *attvā* because Belvalkar, instead of the segmentation I have adopted, read *vākchurīmattvā*, which he glossed, with a question mark, as "knife-swallowing jugglery." I think Belvalkar's reading the less likely one because it is easy to connect the gerund to the subject of the sentence (the enemies of Law), while integrating Belvalkar's abstract noun is more forced. Also, my reading

allows a connection of meaning between both phrases of pāda a, as long as we see the "eating" here restricted to taking into the mouth and not swallowing.

140.19. *A learned man cannot ponder . . . all by himself: svayam ūhen na paṇḍitaḥ.* The verb here must be Whitney's ²√ūh, "consider" (see his *Roots*).

140.34–37. *Is there any law of the barbarians that others should never violate?* Bhīṣma's exhortation to be devoted to learned brahmins answers Yudhiṣṭhira's question with a resounding "No." Anything the brahmins ever find objectionable about any barbarians should be eliminated by the king.

142.7. *The man:* Though speaking of animals, the text uses the term *manuja*, which explicitly refers to humans. Thus I used "woman" in the previous stanza instead of "hen."

142.11. *caught in a trap:* That *śakunaghna* here signifies "trap" rather than "fowler" seems confirmed by the unusual word *kṣāraka* in 20, which Nīlakaṇṭha glosses as "net," *jāla*, when it first occurs at 141.13 above.

142.17. *pigeon way of life: vṛttiḥ kapotī.* Given her exhortation in 14 that he be the hunter's savior, and from what she says in 19 about having already generated progeny and giving up his fondness for his own body, it would seem that the bird sees being eaten by humans as part of the "pigeon way of life."

142.25. *the five 'sacrifices':* The five "Great Sacrifices"; see the notes above at 12.66.8 and 68.34.

142.36. *he grew very critical of his way of life:* Because it precluded his feeding guests.

143.9. *the Great Journey:* the Mahāprasthāna; see the note to *MBh* 11.1.20.

143.10. *lime-twigs: śalākāḥ.* Lime-smeared sticks used in bird-catching.

144.2. Reading Note: *when she has lost her husband and is depressed:* Read *patihīnāmanasvinī.*

145.15. *A woman who follows after her husband as did the pigeon-hen:* A strong endorsement of the value of the immolation of the wife of a dead man. For a succinct but informative discussion of this practice, see Julia Leslie, "Suttee or *Satī*: Victim or Victor?"

146.3. *descendant of Parikṣit:* Belvalkar notes that this Janamejaya "is to be distinguished from the well-known Janamejaya at whose snake sacrifice Vaiśaṃpāyana recites the *Mahābhārata.*" Not only had that Janamejaya not yet been born when Bhīṣma instructed Yudhiṣṭhira, neither had his father Parikṣit. It is more likely that the story originated apart from the *MBh*, the *MBh*'s Janamejaya being intended, and was inserted into these anthologies relatively late. The entire *ADh* seems to be significantly later than at least the first thirty-five chapters of Bhīṣma's instruction in the *rājadharmas.*

146.4. *All the brahmins and his house-priests renounced him:* Brahmicide is basically the worst possible wrong one can commit in a society ordered by dharma (see the note to 12.35.17–19), and the teaching on the possibility of its expiation is not uniform. It is sometimes said that brahmicide can be expiated with great difficulty (e.g., see 12.36.2–4 and 8); at other times it is said that only death purifies the killer of a brahmin (e.g., see 12.159.32, 41–44).

146.11. Text Amendment: *you move about in misery:* Read *carase sukhī* as *carase 'sukhī.* I follow Ganguli's lead here, believing that Belvalkar omitted the usual *avagraha.*

146.13. *Seeking great prosperity . . . :* This śloka is a variant of 12.7.13.

146.16. *many, many years, though not forever: aśaśvatīḥ śaśvatīś ca samāḥ.*

147.5. *A kitchen for the brahmins before: mahānasaṃ brāhmaṇānām.* A "provider of ample food," glosses Belvalkar. This somewhat awkward reading seems to be the right reading: It is *lectio difficilior* and is well attested by the better Kaśmīri mss. Some Northern mss. read the much easier (and banal) *mahānāsam*, "I was a great man," which contrasts neatly with the future verb in pāda b (*bhaviṣyāmi*,) "I will be."

147.7. Text Amendment: *stay that way longer:* Belvalkar should have chosen here the reading *abhirakṣanti* (with some middle voice meaning, in spite of the active ending, "preserve themselves [that way], keep [that status], stay [that way]") instead of the unconstruable *abhinaṅkṣanti*, and that is what I read and translate here. The reading *abhirakṣanti* has an excellent" pedigree" and fits the context very well. Belvalkar chooses the reading (found only in the Śāradā ms. and in K_1) *abhinaṅkṣanti*, which is not a known form. The word *abhinaṅkṣanti*, if it is not some kind of scribal or collational error for *abhirakṣanti*, might be construed as a syncopated desiderative stem of √*naś* ("be lost, perish"; that is, *ninaṅkṣanti*), or as an incorrectly written future stem of the same root (*naṅkṣyanti*), but Belvalkar translates it as if it were the intensive of that root (*nānaśanti*; "perish again and again"). Belvalkar's choice is the *lectio difficilior* from the point of view of Sanskrit grammar; but, semantically, whether construed as the future, *naṅkṣyanti* (they will perish) or some kind of intensive as Belvalkar does, its meaning is actually obvious and bland, while *abhirakṣanti* is neither.

147.12. *or absented himself: parokṣo vā.* Literally, "he who is beyond sight, invisible." Belvalkar suggests the highly forced "not having clear vision of truth."

147.20. *Some very wise men will recognize that this is a remedy: ke cid eva mahāprājñāḥ parijñāsyanti kāryatām.* I have translated the word *kārya*, "what might be, should be, or must be done," as "remedy" above at 147.20 and below at 148.16, as well as here. Given the circumstance on which this account is premised, the "remedy" of the king's condition is the rite or deed that "might, or must be done." An alternative possibility to be considered here, where the brahmin imagines other brahmins making serious objection to his remedying the king's situation, is the opposite possibility that some wise brahmins will recognize what Indrota does for King Janamejaya to be an "obligation" on the part of brahmins. I have chosen the more economical rendering.

148.10 (1). *Kuru's Field:* On Kurukṣetra as a holy place of pilgrimage, see *MBh* 3.81.1 ff. It frees one from his or her sins. See too the LCP, s.v. "Kurukṣetra."

148.10 (2). *Pṛthūdaka:* See *MBh* 3.81.122 ff.

148.11 (1). *Mahāsaras:* "Great Lake." A body of water is described as *mahat saras* at *MBh* 13.105.45, but no particular Mahāsaras is known. The whole of śloka 11 breaks the continuity between 10 and 12, which are both concerned with sites on the Sarasvatī river in the vicinity of Kurukṣetra. Puṣkāra (the holy bathing spot of Brahmā; see *MBh* 3.80.41 ff.), of course, is in the middle of Rajasthan; Prabhāsa (regarding which see *MBh* 3.118.15–23 and the note to 12.49.59) is on the far western coast, in Gujarat; and Lake Mānasa is a sacred lake on Mount Kailāsa.

148.11 (2). *you will again go into "The Waters of Time," having regained the vital energy for life: kālodaṃ tv eva gantāsi labdhāyur jīvite punaḥ.* The word *kāloda* is problematic (a number of Northern mss. read *kālodaka* instead). It is quite possible that *kāloda* is a Sanskritized rendering of a local name, which is how Ganguli took it. *MBh* 13.26.225* suggests that it might well have been a place name, or, if 13.26.225* was derived from the passage here, that the borrower took it as one. However, apart from 13.26.225,* this word is unknown in old Sanskrit literature as the name of a pilgrimage place. S. M. Bharadwaj's *Hindu Places of Pilgrimage* nowhere mentions a pilgrimage site known as Kāloda and takes no notice of this passage nor the one in Book 13.

Both *uda* and *udaka* can be understood as Sanskrit words meaning "water," and the compound signifies "the waters of Time," which is how I have taken the word here. I see it as an abstract expression for one's life in this world, or for one's entire round of lives, deaths, and rebirths. *MBh* 12.227.13–16 develops an extended metaphor of Time as a great river or ocean that inexorably drags the beings sent forth by the Creator to the house of Yama.

148.12. *You shall move along, keeping close to the Sarasvatī and the Dṛṣadvatī:* The Sarasvatī bounds the northern side of "Kuru's Field," and the Dṛṣadvatī the southern; see *MBh* 3.81.175 and *MBh* 9.36.41 and 48, which locates Kurukṣetra on the southern bank of the Sarasvatī. See the map printed in the front of the volumes of this translation and Bharadwaj's map in *Hindu Places of Pilgrimage* (30).

148.14–15. *Like a child:* Presuming I have construed the individual sentences here accurately, the purport of these two stanzas on the matter of this chapter is not clear, nor is the relationship among the different statements.

148.14. *in this world: asmin*, for *asmin . . . loke.*

148.21. *Do not think you will have no descendants:* Construe *na niḥśeṣeṇa acikitsyena vā [tvayā] mantavyam.* Recall Janamejaya's anxiety concerning his family's "remnant" at 147.5–6.

148.22. *he gets free of a third quarter:* This formula overlaps significantly with Janamejaya's description of himself at 147.15. The next verse (23ab) overlaps with 147.15 verbally too.

148.24–26. *gets completely free of his evil that day:* The expiations described in these three stanzas are much more general than fit our story. For example, Janamejaya resolved to perform asceticism (and did so, at 146.5cd) without enjoying the benefit described here.

148.25. *However many living beings a fetus-killer has slain: yāvataḥ prāṇino hanyāt tajjātīyān svabhāvataḥ / pramīyamāṇān unmocya bhrūṇahā vipramucyate.* As these stipulations of expiations occur in the context of Janamejaya's brahmicide, we should expect, as Adam Bowles has argued (personal communication), that the application of the term *bhrūṇahan* here is to brahmicide. The ambiguity of the term is very interesting and cannot easily be dispelled.

148.26. *Manu said:* See Manu 11.259–60 (11.260–61 in Bühler and in Doniger and Smith).

149.0. This story plays with the form of the folk tales and parables that teach practical wisdom, *nīti.* It is based upon the premise that the bodies of the young are not cremated (see Jagdish NarainTiwari, *Disposal of the Dead,* ch. 5). The vulture and the jackal each want the dead boy's body, and each makes persuasive arguments to the boy's family to leave the body, or stay with the body longer. The vulture wants the family to leave the body before the sun sets, for the vulture is diurnal, and after nightfall the nocturnal creatures, specifically the jackal, will feed; and according to *Britannica CD, Version 98 1994–97,* s.v. "vulture," "Feeding vultures maintain a strict social order, by species, based on body size and strength of beak. They all give way, however, to mammalian competitors (as jackals and hyenas)." The jackal, on the other hand, is a nocturnal animal and wants the family to guard the body from the vulture until his normal time for activity. But the resolution of this story lies beyond the juxtaposition of their self-interested arguments, and the jackal's argument turns out to be true, to his chagrin.

149.32. *ascetically enduring suffering: tapas,* which is a term that refers not just to deliberately contrived austerities such as periods of fasting or more severe "penances," but more broadly to any suffering willingly endured or tolerated for some higher purpose. Gāndhārī's voluntary endurance of the pain of blindness—which was suggested to her by the ideal of wifely subordination—is a good example of such *tapas;* see the note to *MBh* 11.16.2.

149.34. *They leave by yet another path:* Belvalkar's correct reading of the *lectio difficilior tyaktvā* ("having abandoned, having left behind") in 34d greatly complicates the understanding of this verse in the context. The more widespread and easy reading of *baddhaḥ* ("bound by") gives this much more contextually integrated sense to the entire verse: "The son is not born with the karma of his father, nor is the father born with the karma of his son. They [or perhaps better, all (beings)] go by separate paths, bound by their own good and bad deeds." What exactly may be meant by "relinquishing their good and evil deeds" (*tyaktvā sukṛtaduṣkṛte*) is not clear.

149.46 (1). *for exertion succeeds by means of fate: (yatnaḥ) kṛto daivena sidhyati.*

149.46 (2). *together with the deeds one has done previously: kṛtāntena;* van Buitenen's rendering with "death" at 3.181.26 is wrong (but note that he hypothesizes *ajñāna-* for *jñāna-* in 3.181.26d).

149.55. Text Amendment: I read *upāsata* here with the Kaśmīrī tradition and take it as an imperfect. Belvalkar's reading of the anomalous *upāsate* is based only upon the mss. V_1 $B_{0.3}$ Da_2, which are (rightly) almost never relied upon by themselves.

149.62. *the śūdra Śambūka:* A reference to Rāma Daśaratha's belatedly doing his kingly duty (dharma) by slaying the śūdra Śambūka, who had improperly undertaken asceticism. A brahmin boy had died because of the violation of the proper behavior for the Orders of society, and the boy was revived when Rāma finally restored order. See *Rām.* 7.66–67 for the story.

149.73. *nor because you may cheer up: na cāśvāsakṛtena,* with *kṛtena* used as *kṛte.*

149.74. *our Merit and Demerit from this life: dharmādharmau.*

149.84. *Misery is right next to happiness, happiness is right next to misery:* A statement from the "Senajit" sermon, which was mentioned in the note to 12.26.13. In addition to 12.26.23cd and 12.168.18ef, this śloka also occurs at 3.247.45ab.

149.102. *The jackal thought . . . : gṛdhro 'nastam ite tv āha gate 'stam iti jambukaḥ.* My translation is a not completely satisfactory way of dealing with the difficult text here. Several Northern manuscripts dissolved the problem by reading a text that gave the easy, "The vulture said [to the boy's relatives], 'The sun has set,' and the jackal told them, 'It has not set.'" Belvalkar's correct reading precludes this easy coordination with the argument the vulture had made that the sun had set (e.g., at śloka 11) and the jackal's rebuttal (e.g., at śloka 15). Another unsatisfying possibility is to try to construe the two animals as arguing between themselves about whether the sun has set or not.

149.116. *This notion for all beings . . . : eṣā buddhiḥ samastānāṃ cāturvarṇye nidarśitā.* Neither the expression "this notion" (*eṣā buddhiḥ*) nor the word *samastānām* (of all, of all together) is perfectly clear. I take the "notion" referred to to be the summation of the story stated in stanza 112 (the statement that persistent optimism, unwavering conviction, and divine grace lead to benefits). I take the reference to "all together" to imply *bhūtānām,* "beings, creatures." This universality contrasts directly with the subset of all beings (the four Orders of brahminically defined society) for whose education this story was composed.

150.1. *śalmali tree:* Bor's *Manual* has this to say of the *Salmalia malabarica* Schott et Endl.: "[T]he well-known *Simul* or Cotton tree . . . is one of the largest of Indian trees. It develops enormous buttresses at the base and the silky covering of the seeds finds many uses. . . . The tree grows well on silt and is to be found everywhere in eastern India on the banks of alluvial streams" (163).

150.30. *living, breathing beings: prāṇinaḥ,* beings that possess *prāṇāḥ,* the "breaths that are life." The normal sense and translation of *prāṇinaḥ* is "living beings." I have expanded the translation of it here since wind, the source of breath, is the thematic center of this context.

151.11. *the Supreme Lord himself:* An indirect rendering of *svayaṃprabhuḥ.* This designation occurs half a dozen times in the *MBh* and *Rām.* (*MBh* 6.63.7, 12.332.1, 13.78.5 and *Rām.* 1.2.22 and 6.105.6) and means essentially *svayaṃbhu,* "the self-existent being," one of the designations of the highest God. If this passage were taken by itself, however, it could be construed more literally with "I am not afraid of you, wind, even if you are a mighty lord in your own right." But the suggestion at 150.23 that Wind might be seen as the supreme being (*parameṣṭhin*) points the reading of this passage toward the more theological interpretation.

151.30. *one might make someone think: cintayet,* taken causatively. Taking this verb causatively is not necessary (one could simply render 30cd with the parenthetic "But similarly, one might think that nothing exists that is the equal of power"), but taking it causatively allows us to take 30cd as a contextually precise illustration of 30ab. My thanks to Adam Bowles (personal communication) for his dissent to my earlier, less apt interpretation of this stanza.

152.4. *ennui: parāsutā,* an interpretation of the word—based on indications at 157.11—with which the later Petersburg Dictionary, *Sanskrit Wörterbuch in Kürzerer Fassung,* concurs.

152.16 (1). *properly educated: śiṣṭa.*

152.16 (2). *vile snatchers of Merit: dharmavaitaṃsikāḥ,* a compound used by Nakula at 12.12.14 as a criticism of the claimed hypocrisy of renouncers. See the note there.

152.16 (3). *[they] fly the flag of Law: dhvajinaḥ,* an elliptical expression for *dharmadhvajinaḥ* as in śloka 28 below.

153.8. *in all this:* A literal but uncertain rendering of *etayā.* The pronoun without a clear antecedent signifies some unconstruable ellipsis or some pre-archetypal corruption of the written text. I basically follow Belvalkar's parenthetic suggestion that it is equivalent to *etāvatā,* "all this (that has been introduced)."

154.17cd. *and avoiding gossip . . . :* I believe the text here is an ancient correction of the prosodically incorrect line that appears at 12.213.11ab. The result is not happy; it requires twisting *janavāda,* "gossip," out of its usual simple meaning (see Belvalkar's note). Thus I have translated the line as one *samastapada,* as it appears at 12.213.11ab.

154.19. *is never filled up:* An expression difficult to grasp in this connection. Ganguli and then

Belvalkar both tried their hand at it with little success. I do not know what it means here (see 152.12a).

154.24. *Whatever good karma, . . . the Merit of the hermit is never deficient:* A very interesting statement bearing upon the course of the historical development of ideas of dharma. Sages are often said to be beyond karma, beyond dharma and adharma and the other *dvaṃdvas* ("pairs of opposites"). But here, in a relation that is a kind of inversion of the *bodhisattva's* connection to others, we are told that the sage gains the good karma, dharma in the sense of Merit, done by others, while not acting himself. An interesting mixture of these two perspectives is developed in ślokas 29–31 below.

154.30. *special techniques: vidyāḥ.* Special formulas, rites, or devices suited to the gaining of particular ends.

155.4d. Text Reading Note: Read *tapo mūlam* as *tapomūlam.*

155.9–10. *nothing more difficult to do:* These two somewhat problematic ślokas do not occur in the set of manuscripts (the "Kaśmīri" manuscripts) which the critical edition of Pune typically takes as the standard. The editor of this volume, Belvalkar, calls this a haplographic omission, but that seems unwarranted. These two stanzas are well integrated to the context thematically, but they seem to have come into the *MBh* sometime after the written archetype had settled in Kaśmīr.

156.3. *The mixing of the Laws of the four social Orders is disapproved:* What will follow is essentially a treatment of what is elsewhere called *sāmānyadharma,* dharma "common" to all people regardless of *varṇa.* Bhīṣma makes certain at the outset to ward off the idea that *sāmānyadharma* is tantamount to *varṇasaṃkara.* The Law that is common to people of different *varṇas* is based upon something that is virtually identical in them, the "Real" *(satya),* that which has been "least transformed" *(avikāritama)* in the course of the progressive emanation *(sarga)* of people from the ultimate source of all that exists.

156.10. *it is arrived at through yoga meditation:* The virtues recommended here are grounded in the transcendent Real, and their cultivation is grounded in attending to that Real, "making it present to oneself," or "opening onself to it," in meditation.

157.1. *questioning curiosity: vivitsā.* Given the explanation of this in 157.9, this vice is not "avarice" as we have seen the word used before. Here it is based on the root √*vid, vetti,* "know," rather than √*vid, vindati, vidyate,* "find, acquire." But this curiosity is a vice, and stanza 9 suggests it is so because it represents a breach in the authority of tradition.

157.17 (1). *Pity: kṛpā.* Nīlakaṇṭha explains this as a vice by saying that Vyāsa supposed pity "deranged the mind" *(cittonmāthakarī)* and that it "entailed hatred or hostility" *(dveṣabaddheyā).*

157.17 (2). *where doing one's Law terminates: dharmaniṣṭhā,* that is, the ultimate benefit a person gains from faithfully following and doing his or her proper Law, a good life in the world beyond this one. This usage is closely paralleled in Śalya's description of the dead warriors to Duryodhana at 8.68.31: "Having given up their bodies, various luxuries, fine clothes, and charming pleasures, they have gained the wonderful culmination of performing their particular Law *(svadharmaniṣṭhāṃ mahatīm avāpya)* and gone to worlds that are bathed in glory." Other, rather different uses of this interesting compound term occur in the *MBh;* see 11.10.17, 12.60.19, 72.3, 251.6, and 312.7.

158.11. *some hearty food . . . to consume: bhakṣyaṃ bhojyam lehyaṃ yac cānyat sādhu bhojanam.* I base my translation of these four references to four kinds of food ("food to be chewed, food not requiring chewing, food to be licked [like sugar-cane, or food licked from fingers or ladle], and other good food") on Nīlakaṇṭha's comment to 1.165.11 and MW, s.v. *"bhojya."*

159.0. Closely connected to this chapter is the eleventh book of the *Manusmṛti.* The two pieces have many overlapping stanzas (with significant variants), and their overall structure is parallel. I am grateful to Patrick Olivelle, who is working on a translation of Manu, for his valuable comments on my translation of this *adhyāya.* Whatever inaccuracies remain are my own.

159.1–3. *He who:* These three *ślokas,* which overlap with Manu 11.1–3, have very close parallels in *GautDS* 5.21–22, *BauDS* 2.3.5.19–20, and *ĀpastDS* 2.5.10.1–3.

159.1. *He who has already accomplished his ends: kṛtārthaḥ,* a somewhat obscure idea in the context, and one which several Northern manuscripts turned into *hṛtārtha,* "whose wealth has been stolen." The parallel idea at *GautDS* 5.21 agrees with the sentiment of this Northern variant of the *MBh: vṛttikṣīṇa,* "lost their livelihood." I have taken *kṛtārthaḥ* here to be the opposite of *yakṣyamāṇa,* "one who is about to perform sacrificial rituals." That is, I think it signifies one who has already expended a serious amount of his wealth in performing a rite, or rites, which have been successful. The *yakṣyamāṇa* man still has his wealth, but contemplates expending it in pursuit of his ends *(arthas).* Belvalkar suggests taking *kṛta* in an unusual sense and connecting it to *yakṣyamāṇa* directly: He would translate *kṛtārtha* with "(one who has) won, or accumulated, wealth," and who is, then, about to perform the sacrificial rite.

159.2. *who are beggars for the sake of Law: dharmabhikṣavaḥ.* Brahmins who need charity because of their performance of some deed, or their habitual performance of many deeds, of dharma.

159.3 (1). *Food that is not uncooked: nākṛtānnam.* Perhaps this is merely a double negative construction employed to fill the meter, in which case it would be better to translate simply "cooked food."

159.3 (2). *away from the altar: bahirvedyām.* That is, what is not given as *dakṣiṇā* to priests who have performed sacrificial rituals for a prince or wealthy patron. Those considerations are given *antarvedi,* "at, or on, or in the Vedi altar area." See Kullūka's comment to Manu 4.227.

159.5. *He who has a [three-year] supply of food . . . :* This śloka occurs at Manu 11.7, where, interestingly, it is followed immediately by a stanza saying, "When a twice-born who has less substance than that (a three-year supply of food) drinks Soma, he does not get the benefit of it; not even if he has drunk Soma on an earlier occasion."

159.8. *a śūdra has no property that belongs to him in his dwelling: na hi veśmani śūdrasya kaś cid asti parigrahaḥ.*

159.14. *the "offering to the universal fire":* Vaiśvānarī *iṣṭi.* An offering to "the fire that is common to all men" (regarding the Vaiśvānara fire, see H. Bodewitz's translation of *Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa* 1, ch. 45–46, 114–15). The Vaiśvānarī *iṣṭi* is not a well-known rite in the tradition. Medhātithi, in his commentary upon Manu 11.27, says it is known from "household traditions" *(gṛhyasmṛtibhyaḥ). HDhŚ,* 2: 228–29 cites an offering to Vaiśvānara (Agni) that is prescribed at *TS* 2.2.5.3–4 upon the birth of a son. This would not seem to be the same rite our author has in mind here. In Manu the Vaiśvānarī *iṣṭi* is prescribed to make up for one's not performing any animal or Soma sacrifices, and that is what Nīlakaṇṭha writes of concerning this passage. Thus the performance of this rite is proposed as a substitute *(pratinidhi)* for the performance of those other rites at their due times—hence the following comments on the subject of the legitimacy of such substitutions.

159.16. *[that man] is in bad faith and does not get any benefit from it in the next world: na sāṃparāyikaṃ tasya durmater vidyate phalam.* The word *durmati,* signifies "having poor understanding," "making a bad judgment," being "a fool." But since the point here concerns the willful use of a lesser form of a rule, there seems to be an imputation of culpability to the faulty understanding or judgment, that is, an imputation of "bad faith."

159.20. *servers of the Agnihotra sacrifice: pariveṣṭṛ-s.* Normally this word refers to waiters. It is unclear to whom it might refer here.

159.22. *zealously pious: śraddadhānaḥ.* An important occurrence of this word; see the notes above at 12.10.19 and 28.41.

159.25. *becomes a śūdra through his deeds: śūdrakarmeha gacchati.* The text may say either "(now [i.e., after twelve years]) he goes (about), a man who does the work of a śūdra (a man who does the things śūdras do)," reading *śūdrakarmā-iha,* or "(after the twelve years) he goes to śūdra-work," reading *śūdrakarma-iha.* Both readings amount to the same thing (and my translation would do for either one), but I think the latter is more likely, for I would rather see *vartate* if we had *śūdrakarmā.*

159.26–27. *The brahmin who keeps . . . while standing by day and sitting by night":* See *BaudDS* 2.1.2.10–11 and *ĀpastDS* 1.9.27.10–11 for a parallel passage shared by both those texts. The expression *sthānāsanābhyāṃ viharan* (alternately standing and sitting), which occurs several times in the dharma literature, is probably best understood in terms of *GautDS* 26.6:

"He who desires (to be purified) quickly, shall stand during the day, and sit during the night." (Bühler) Bühler typically translates this expression in this way. This penance is prescribed for a number of different offenses.

159.26. *who keeps a non-Aryan woman for sex while forsaking a twice-born woman he still supports as his wife: anāryāṃ śayane bibhrad ujjhan bibhrac ca yo dvijām.* The participle *ujjhan*, "rejecting, abandoning, quitting," refers only to quitting the twice-born woman with regard to having sexual intercourse with her.

159.27. *by observing the vows of a student: vratī san.* Concerning the term *vratin*, see the note to 12.36.22. Here I have interpreted "being a *vratin*" in the specific sense of "observing the vows of a student," because nothing in this context militates against seeing the term as carrying that specific sense.

159.28. *these five kinds of lies are not serious sins:* The same point is made at *MBh* 12.35.25 and at *GautDS* 23.29–31, and a close parallel to this triṣṭubh occurs at Vāsiṣṭha 16.36 (16.35 in Bühler's translation).

159.29–30. *One who is zealously pious . . . :* These two ślokas are paralleled by Manu 2.238–39.

159.30. *with respect to their functions in connection with Meritorious, Lawful Deeds: aduṣṭā hi striyo ratnam āpa ity eva dharmataḥ.* Unclean or inauspicious external conditions surrounding women, water, and gems do not vitiate their utility for their husbands' or a sacrificers' accomplishing deeds of dharma that require their participation or use.

159.32 (1). *The drinking of liquor . . . :* The close resemblances among ślokas 32ab, 33ab, 34ab, and 35abcd here, *Viṣṇusmṛti* 35.1–5, and Vāsiṣṭha 1.19–22 suggest there must have been some unusually close historical linkage among them. The passage here, though, seems more complicated and highly developed than the two shorter dharma texts.

159.32 (2). *These offenses are regarded as ineligible for expiations, up to the end of life: anirdeśyāni manyante prāṇāntāni.* Parallel (punitive) instances of the word *(a-)nirdeśya* imply the word *(pāpāni) karmāṇi* as subject and the idea of *prāyaścitta* as "what is specified" for those (evil) deeds." Various evil deeds have *prāyaścitta* "specified," these three do not (see Gautama 21.7, and below 37c). What is here excluded are the normal sorts of expiatory remedies for these sins that allow the offender eventually to live as before the sin. Certain forms of painful death cleanse the offender's sin (see below 44–46), but until the offender undergoes such fatal suffering, he or she is "fallen" (*patita;* see the note to 159.35 below for an explanation of this term). See Manu 11.146cd (11.147 in Bühler and in Doniger and Smith) for another parallel instance. The various writers on Dharmaśāstra deal with these offenses quite differently (see the note to 12.146.4 above); see *HDhŚ*, 4: 87–102. The sense of this passage parallels that of Manu 11.146cd.

159.33 (1). Text Amendment: Read *viprasvaṃ ceti* (along with most of the manuscripts of the north and south) instead of Belvalkar's emendation *viprāsaṅgaś ca.* Belvalkar is correct that this reading is awkward in some ways, but I believe it can be adequately construed.

159.33 (2). *living a dissolute life drinking liquor and having illicit sex: viharan madyapānaṃ cāpy agamyāgamanaṃ tathā.* The word *viharan* poses significant syntactical difficulties. I agree with Belvalkar that it is the correct reading, but I do not accept his suggestion to construe it as a present participle that depends upon *bhavati* in 34d, for 34 is completely disconnected from 33 and is sufficient by itself. Nor is Nīlakaṇṭha's suggestion to assume an implicit *karoti* ("he does [the drinking and having sex with proscribed women]") acceptable, for such a complete sentence could not then be easily construed as a further grammatical subject for the predicate "a sin" (*pātaka* in 33b). For lack of any better alternative, I construe *viharan* as a syncopated form of *viharaṇam*, which literally means "diverting oneself, passing one's time pleasurably," and sometimes connotes irresponsible self-indulgence. I construe this noun as a general characterization meant to apply, by apposition, to the two sins specifically mentioned. The only alternative construction that occurs to me is to see *viharan* as a participle with essentially the same meaning, awkwardly governing the two following nouns and standing ungrammatically free of any connection to any subject.

159.33 (3). *having illicit sex: agamyāgamanam;* literally, "approaching (for sex) a woman whom he should not approach." For a listing of *agamyā* women, see Manu 11.171–72. Included are sisters, daughters-in-law, and friends' wives.

159.34. *even if by marriage: yonitas tathā*, taking *yoni*, "womb, vagina, vulva," as a metonymous reference to the women of the patrilocal household. This very plausible suggestion comes from Patrick Olivelle. The word *yoni* is frequently used metonymously for one's "birth" (and hence, metaphorically, it often means the "source, or origin" of something), and it frequently extends too to "home, family, nest." So it is no stretch at all to see "womb" here as implying the women of the household generally: one's mother, one's wife, one's sisters- and, or, daughters-in-law, all of whom come by marriage from other families that could conceivably have members who may "fall." Once such in-laws "fall," one must avoid them. This interpretation of *yoni* is strengthened by the fact that the derivative adjective *yauna* (which is used in the next stanza) signifies "marriage, matrimonial."

159.35. *causes one to fall in a year:* My translation here renders the stanza in the most straightforward and economical way possible, the same as Kangle does for the three parallel pādas at *AŚ* 4.7.28. Some, though not all commentators (see Bühler's note to the parallel passage of Manu 11.181), assume that the "in a year" refers only to the traveling, sitting, and eating with the fallen, the assumption being that sacrificing for, teaching, or marrying the fallen makes one fall not in a year, but immediately. Construing the stanza with this assumption in mind results in the fundamental sytanctic contortion of taking the "*na tu*" of pāda d as governing pāda c backwards. Scharfe (*Untersuchungen*, 50–51) takes *patita* not as the general "fallen from standing in one's group," but as defining (and limiting) the areas in which the reprobate falls ("He who associates with someone expelled from his caste loses the right to offer sacrifices for others, etc., but not the right to travel with someone, etc."). Scharfe's interpretation has much to commend it (see in particular Gautama 21.4—"'falling' means being cut off from the deeds [rites, pious works, Lawful means of livelihood] of the twice born"), but I choose to read this stanza in connection with 34 preceding it. So I take the ablatives here to specify the reasons for falling or not—parallel to the ablative *saṃyogāt* there. Finally, to the question How could marriage with a spouse from a fallen family not cause instantaneous falling (as it was clearly so regarded by many; see, for example, *ViṣS* 35.3–5), it is possible that the fallen condition could be remedied within a year, or the marriage might be repudiated.

159.37 (1). *one who has not fallen: apātite*, instead of *apatite* for the sake of the meter.

159.37 (2). *not offered sideways into the fire: annaṃ tiryaṅ na hotavyam.* As he explains the point of the stanza, Belvalkar also offers an understanding of the sideways offering: "The question whether the funeral offerings are to be straight into the blazing fire or sideways (so that the offerings, falling outside the fire, become fit for goblins and Rākṣasas) does not arise" in the case of the aforementioned three *patitas.*

159.38. *A Righteous man should, with the Lawful rite, abandon members of his family, even his parents:* See *GautDS* 20.1–17 for this idea and a description of a rite of disavowal. Proscriptions of subsequent conversation follow in Gautama, as here.

159.47. *he may cut off:* This phrase translates the gerund *ādāya* which I take to derive from the root 3√*dā, dāti*, "cut, mow," in BR. One reason for doing so is that most of the parallel passages in other Dharmaśāstra texts have either *parivāsya* or *utkṛtya* (both of which mean "having cut off").

159.48. *Or he may give up his life:* I believe that this śloka returns the text to the subject of brahmicide, after 45–47 elaborated upon the other two great sins. Ślokas 48cd–50ab resemble the presentations on the expiation of brahmicide in other Dharmaśāstra texts such as *BauDS* 2.1.1.3–4 and Manu 11.72 ff.

159.49. *carrying a skull: kapālin.* Arjunamiśra suggests that the skull he carries is that of the brahmin he has slain. Ganguli translates it this way, though Nīlakaṇṭha is silent.

159.50cd (1). Technical Note: *who assaults and kills: yo 'bhigacchati.* The verb *abhi-√gam, abhigacchati* must here mean "attack (and kill)," parallel to *abhi-√yā, yāti.* The verbal prefix *abhi-* often signifies a violent movement against someone. But normally *abhi-√gam* merely means "go to." Sometimes it means "go to for sex." Everything else in this context, however, points to the killing of an *ātreyī* woman, and the majority of manuscripts have lost the anomalous *abhigacchati* in favor of the seemingly much more suitable *nipātayet*, "if he should kill." Obviously the *abhigacchati* of the Śāradā manuscript and K_1 is the *lectio difficilior* and the correct reading. We must simply expand the range of the known meaning of *abhi-√gam.*

159.50cd (2). *an* ātreyī *woman:* The word *ātreyī* is a technical term signifying a woman who has recently finished her period and is thus believed ready to conceive. Whereas the killing of a woman is typically equivalent to killing a śūdra, killing an *ātreyī* is equivalent to killing a kṣatriya or, as here, a brahmin. Stephanie Jamison has nicely synthesized, elucidated, and explained the references in the Vedic, Brāhmaṇa, and Dharmaśāstra literature in *The Ravenous Hyenas and the Wounded Sun* (213–42). She explains the special treatment of the *ātreyī* this way: "The ātreyī merits special treatment precisely because of her peculiar fitness for conception. Since she is in a state most conducive to conceiving, killing her is tantamount to killing an embryo as well. It is equivalent to (and may possibly be) abortion. . . . [P]reventing potential pregnancies is legally as serious as aborting real ones. . . . [A]n ātreyī is valued [not for herself] but as a potential vessel for a fetus" (216).

159.50cd (3). Technical Note: *not knowing whether she is pregnant or not: garbham ajñātā.* Belvalkar construes this as "one not knowing the fact that conception had taken place." He seems to construe the reading as the nominative singular of an adjective *ajñātṛ*. Though grammatically possible, this explanation seems unlikely. More likely there is a scribal error in the Śāradā tradition (Belvalkar's text here reproduces the reading of the unique Śāradā manuscript, which alone reads *ajñātā*). I suspect the Śāradā tradition here once agreed with K_1, which reads the probably best *ajñātvā*. Or perhaps it read *ajñātāṃ* with the majority of manuscripts before the *bindu* was accidentally dropped in copying; then K_1 might have repaired the reading of its putative Śāradā exemplar with *ajñātvā*. The meaning seems clear enough, whichever reading is preferred.

159.51. *a thousand cows with one bull: ṛṣabhaikasahasraṃ gā.* I follow the commentary of Vimalabodha in interpreting this number. He writes, "*ekavṛṣādhikastrīgavīsahasram*" and gives the alternative "*ekādhikaṃ sahasram ekasahasram.*"

159.55. *For fornication: talpe.* The word *talpa*, "bed," is used metonymously for "sexual intercourse" in Dharmaśāstra literature, usually in the compound *gurutalpe*, which signifies "violating the bed of one's teacher."

159.56. *observing the vows of a student: vratin.* See the notes above at 159.27 and 12.36.22. For *standing by day and sitting by night*, see the note above at 159.26–27.

159.63. *he who makes the marriage happen: pāṇigrāhaḥ.* I am grateful to Patrick Olivelle for suggesting that *pāṇigrāhaḥ* here must be a causative noun pointing to either the "giver of the bride" or the priest, who are also explicitly condemned in the parallel verse at Manu 3.172.

159.64. *the Cāndrāyaṇa fast:* A fasting scheme in which the observing person eats fifteen small mouthfuls of food on the full-moon day, decreases his or her intake of food by one mouthful each day during the fifteen lunar days between full moon and new moon, thus fasting on the new-moon day, and then increasing the amount of food by one mouthful during the fifteen lunar days between new moon and full moon. See *GautDS* 27.1–18. For the "Austere fast" *(kṛcchra)* see the note above to 12.36.4.

159.66 (1). *If one has intercourse with beasts . . . he is not ruined if he does not ejaculate: amānuṣīṣu govarjam anāvṛṣṭir na duṣyati.* With Belvalkar, I follow Arjunamiśra's lead in interpreting the unusual word *anāvṛṣṭi*, which literally means "not raining, not showering" (and occurs in that meaning one time in prior or contemporaneous Dharmaśāstra literature, at Vāsiṣṭha 3.12), as "without ejaculation" *(anāvṛṣṭiḥ retaḥsekarahitaḥ)*.

159.66 (2). *an eater of them: attāram.* The commentator Vimalabodha, reflecting the ethics of a later time, explains the literal meaning of this word away by writing, "*attāram: tasya [paśor] bahutaraduḥkhadānād attāraṃ bhakṣakaṃ viduḥ*, ([regarding the word] *attāram* [in the text]: They know him [man] as the *attāram*, the eater of it [the animal] because he gives it so much pain)."

159.67. *But having put on a hide:* Gautama specifies this penance for the student who has broken his vow of chastity; see *GautDS* 23.17–18.

159.70. *rooster:* Probably the male *Gallus gallus murghi* Robinson and Kloss, Salim Ali's "Indian Red Junglefowl," a large bird of far northern and eastern India that crows before sunrise and at dawn. The rooster is about two feet long and is "glossy, deep orange-red" above "with long yellowish neck-hackles" and "chiefly blackish-brown below" (Ali, *Handbook*, 2: 102 ff.). The female is about seventeen inches in length and less brightly colored. This rooster is interestingly associated with the ruddy son of Fire, Skanda, at *MBh* 3.214–18.

159.72. *It is to be applied: jāyate;* literally "it arises, comes into use, becomes suitable."

160.10. *a mountain streaked with red veins of minerals: dhātumān iva parvataḥ.* I agree with Nīlakaṇṭha's suggestion that the streaks of (typically) red minerals refer to the blood flowing over Bhīṣma's body, caused by the excitement he felt at Nakula's question (a connection made explicit by Ganguli in a note to his translation).

160.13. *the underworld: nairṛtim:* "the Nirṛti, the depths below the earth, 'the locus of dissolution and decay'" (BR, s.v. "*nirṛti*"). This sense of *nairṛti* is not given in any of the other Sanskrit-English dictionaries; Ganguli, however, correctly translated it with "the nether regions."

160.31. *there were stars there by the trillions: himavataḥ pṛṣṭhe suramye padmatārake.* Belvalkar cites other sources referring to a Himalayan mountain named "Padma" ("lotus"), but he offers no explanation then for the *tāraka* (star). It is plausible that the mountain peak might be named Padmatāraka, though I think *padma* should still be taken as an astronomically high number.

160.33. *Kalpa:* A reference to the Kalpasūtras, the manuals of ritual behavior that came to constitute one of the "limbs of the Vedas" (*vedāṅgas*).

160.60. kiṃśuka-*covered: Butea frondosa* Roxb. In his *Manual*, Bor describes the *kiṃśuka* in this way: "A small deciduous tree with a crooked trunk and black nodose branches, common in northern and central India and also in Burma. The flowers are scarlet and orange and are borne in great profusion on the leafless branches. . . . A red juice issues from the blazed tree and hardens into a red astringent gum. . . . The flowers give a dye." (92).

160.68. *by duly apportioning punishments according to considerations of whether the matter is petty or gross: sūkṣmasthūlārthakāraṇāt / vibhajya daṇḍam.* The whole passage here has interesting broad and close parallels with 12.122 above. This śloka is related, with interesting vagaries, to 122.39cd and 40ab. For an interesting parallel to the use of √*bhaj* with *vi-*, see 12.15.32cd.

160.70. *the forms of the sword of punishment: aser etāni rūpāṇi.* As the word *daṇḍa*, "stick, rod," becomes a general word for punishment by metonymy, so too *asi*, "sword," here.

160.72–79. "*Ikṣvāku took it from Kṣupa:* Like some of the other lists of kings in the *MBh* this one has its interesting peculiarities, such as the fact that the founder of the solar dynasty, Ikṣvāku, hands the sword off to Purūravas, whom *MBh* 1.70.16 names as the son of Ilā, the founder of the lunar dynasty (and there is no mention of Ilā in this list); other peculiarities are that Bhūmiśaya is otherwise unknown in the *MBh;* that a king Raivata is mentioned only once (at 5.107.10); and that the obscure patronymic Ailavila (see 12.29.64 and note) appears here in the form Aiḍabiḍa.

160.80 (1). *Kṛttikās:* The Pleiades, the third lunar mansion, of which Agni is the regent deity (see *ŚB* 2.1.2.1). This constellation is also associated with razors and knives and with Skanda, the God of War, from an early date.

160.80 (2). *its shelter is "the red ones": rohiṇyo gotram asyātha.* The interpretation of the first two of these words is very uncertain. A *rohiṇī* is a cow in the Vedas, particularly a red cow, and the term also designates young girls who have just begun menstruating. I take *gotra* here to mean "shelter, place of protection" (from the etymology *go-tra*, "cow-shed," or "cow-pen"). It would not seem too fanciful to suggest there is a connection here between vaginas (the etymology of the English word traces back to "sheath," and "scabbard") penises, sheaths and swords. In the background would seem to lie imagery of the vagina as a bloody wound caused by a sword. The word *gotra* here could also conceivably mean "its tribe, or family, or clan," giving "its tribe are 'the red ones.'" Less clear is the possibility that *rohiṇyaḥ* could be interpreted as signifying simultaneously "those that grow, shoot up," being an allusion to the extension of the sword and its phallic overtones. The color red and the phallic imagery of the spear are usual features of the handsome young man Skanda, and his Tamil counterpart Murugan, with whom the sword is here associated. But somewhat complicating this possibility is the feminine gender of *rohiṇyaḥ*.

161.11. *There are no actions that do not aim at some Profit: artha ity eva sarveṣāṃ karmaṇām avyatikramaḥ.* More literally the sentence reads, "'Profit' is (that thing which) all actions do not bypass."

161.15. *pursue material Gains: arthārthinaḥ.* This argument is apparently based upon some of the same criticisms of asceticism that Arjuna, Nakula, and Sahadeva voiced many days before when arguing against Yudhiṣṭhira's decision to abandon the kingship (particularly in 12.11–13 and 12.18). The essence of this argument turns upon distinguishing between completely relinquishing objects and completely relinquishing all attachment to them. See the point made in 18cd below ("Non-understanding is darkness . . .").

161.17. *some of them pursue material Gains and some want heaven: arthārthinaḥ santi ke cid apare svargakāṅkṣiṇaḥ.* How these two characterizations are meant is not obvious. The first, "pursuing material gains," may, as in 15, simply refer to the pseudo-renunciation implied there. In this case it seems mendicants are intended, rather than the hermits described earlier, and recall that mendicants' begging was criticized as being (in some if not all instances) *dānārtham,* "for the sake of (getting) gifts" at 12.18.31a. The second characterization, "wanting heaven," is more difficult. Gaining heaven is a pursuit of dharma and is often not distinguished from gaining *mokṣa.* As such, this attribution would seem to be meant positively and, if taken that way, would seem to undercut Arjuna's point somewhat. Perhaps the statement is meant simply to say that some of the men described in śloka 16 are not truc and sincere renouncers, and some are.

161.17 (2). *Some, observing the traditions of their various lineages, follow their own particular paths: kulapratyāgamāś caike svaṃ svaṃ mārgam anuṣṭhitāḥ.* I do not understand the exact sense of *kulapratyāgamāḥ,* but I render it as *"yaiḥ kulaṃ praty āgamāḥ sevitāḥ, te* (those who observe the traditions of various lineages)." I take the word *kula,* "clan, family, tribe," to refer to particular renunciatory traditions rather than natural descent groups.

161.18. *Non-understanding is darkness, while understanding is illumination:* The contrast between these two states of knowledge constitutes the essential difference between the true renunciation of the objects of the senses and material goods, and the merely outward show of renunciation.

161.33. *that does not consist essentially of Desire: na . . . bhūtaṃ kāmātmakāt param.* More literally, "that is beyond (or different from) what consists of Desire."

161.48. *the Law beyond these:* I take "these" to refer either to the Laws of the King and the Law in Times of Distress, which have been the subject of Bhīṣma's instruction until now, or, in parallel to the structure of the conversation that has just been reported, to refer to the group of three. In either case, what is "beyond these" would be *mokṣa,* and this passage and this stanza seem to have been composed as a lead-in to *The Laws for Gaining Absolute Freedom,* which commences just ahead at 12.168. Obviously, "The Story of the Ungrateful Brahmin," which is related in 12.162–167, now intervenes, but it would seem that it was added to the *parvan* at some later time.

162.6–14. *Everyone should abandon the sort of man:* These nine ślokas form a single complex utterance in which numerous attributive adjectives and relative clauses describing the undesirable man are accumulated and resolved by the main clause *"tyajet tādṛśaṃ naram* (one should abandon that sort of man)" in 14d. The *yaḥ* in 14d is to be construed as part of 14c (Belvalkar otherwise).

162.17. *those versed in various sciences and Knowledge: jñānavijñānakovidāḥ.* I take *vijñāna* to signify various forms of "detailed, or analytic knowledge," and *jñāna* as "Knowledge par excellence," that is, knowledge of the highest truth.

162.21. *never lose the rosy glow of affection: na virajyanti.* The same verb has been translated by "become alienated" just above. The more literal idea of "lose redness" had to be included here because of the cloth simile.

162.49. *we will both return to our proper selves: ātmānaṃ saha yāsyāvaḥ śvaḥ.* Belvalkar's difficult reading of *ātmānam* in 49c is well supported and is the correct reading. I take it as the direct object (singular used with a distributive sense) of the verb "go" (√*yā, yāti*) and as having the sense of "proper nature," "essence," "fundamental nature" (*svabhāva, prakṛti*). In each case this return amounts to leaving behind the current locale and situation and its degradation. The visitor has been polluted by meeting with, and will be further polluted by staying with, the fallen brahmin. The fallen brahmin's departure from his proper nature is much more vast, but each brahmin must recover "himself." The word *saha,* "together" need not be taken to mean they will accompany each other physically, as it typically does. It is registered here with "both." This point is supported by the fact that the two brahmins go their separate ways in the morning.

163.18. *the direct offspring of the Progenitor Kaśyapa:* Nāḍījaṅgha made a brief appearance in the prose story of Indradyumna at *MBh* 3.191.10. See the LCP s.v. "Kaśyapa" regarding the importance of this Progenitor. Daksa was an important Progenitor born from Brahmā's right thumb; he had many daughters who figured importantly in the making of the world. See *MBh* 1.59–60, 70, and 93.

163.23. *since I have never heard criticism of you:* He characterizes the brahmin as *anindita* ("uncriticized"), thus inadvertently accounting to the audience for his receiving of someone the audience knows to be an impure, unworthy brahmin.

165.9. *"Kārttika":* The twelfth and final month of the year, when the full moon is in or near the constellation Kṛttikā, the Pleiades.

Glossary of Sanskrit Words

adhvaryu—The Vedic priest who performs the actual preparations and offerings at a *yajña.* While other priests chant Vedic hymns (*śastra-s* of the *Ṛg Veda*) or sing Vedic hymns set to music (*sāmans* of the *Sāma Veda*), the *adhvaryu* quietly recites *yajus* formulas from the *Yajur Veda* as he does the business of the rite.

Agnihotra—A Vedic sacrifice performed by an individual brahmin. It consists of offerings of milk and other foods into the fire twice each day, at dawn and again at sunset. This sacrifice occupied the most constant and intimate place in the life of a strictly observant brahmin.

alarka—Some kind of biting insect at 12.3.13.

ānaka—A kind of drum.

anuvāka—An antiphon or refrain, responding to a *vāka* (*q.v.*) in a devotional song.

Apsaras—Beautiful women who sing and dance for the celestials in the heavens; occasionally they descend to earth and interact with humans. "Apsaras" is the singular form of the word; I use "Apsarases" as an Anglicized plural.

Āraṇyaka—The third stratum of Vedic texts, the "Forest Books."

Asura—A class of evil beings. In the distant mythological past the Asuras occupied the place currently held by the Gods (the *deva-s*, or the *sura-s*). But the *devas* defeated the Asuras in a great war and displaced them. So the Asuras remain in perpetual hostility to the current Gods.

atasī—*Linum usitatissimum*, flax; a plant with blue flowers.

bhalla—A kind of large arrowhead said to be capable of decapitating a person. J. A. B. van Buitenen translated it as "bear arrow" at 3.116.24 and speculated in a note that such arrows were "so named either because of their shape or because they were used in hunting bear." (The Sanskrit word *bhalla* means "bear.") S. D. Singh, in *Ancient Indian*

Warfare, wrote that the *bhalla* had a "flattened tip" (105), but the passage he cited (3.116.24) fails to support this description.

bhāruṇḍa—A fantastic predatory bird.

bilva—The bael, or bel, fruit (*Aegle marmelos* Corr). A kind of citrus fruit that is oblong and several inches in diameter (Hooker, *Flora of British India,* 1: 516). The "sweet, thick, orange-coloured pulp" (ibid.) is used to make "a popular sherbet" (Bor, *Manual of Indian Forest Botany,* 245). MW identifies this species as the wood-apple tree in his *Sanskrit-English Dictionary,* but Bor connects this name to the closely related *Limonia acidissima* Linn.

brahman—The word designating the ineffable substance-cum-power that, in Brahminic thought, underlies the entire cosmos. For orthodox ritualists, the mantras of the Vedas are acoustic expressions of *brahman* that function to effect specific good results in the world by directing the flow of the unseen *brahman.* The Upaniṣads, and yogic texts based upon them, argue that *brahman* is the central reality and essence of every thing and every person, the true Self (*ātman*) of everything and everyone. These latter texts lay the basis for a yoga through which an individual person may actually, through his meditative experience, "become *brahman,*" lose his individuality and become nothing but his true brahmic Self. The normal waking consciousness of such a sage is dominated by the ideas that nothing is personally "mine," that all things are "mine," that "I" am in all things, and all things are "in me." Such a sage is kindly disposed to all beings and fears none.

brahmin—The highest of the four *varṇas,* the social Orders of Brahminic society, in India. The brahmins are supposed to descend from the seers and priests of ancient Vedic society, and they were the ones who maintained and employed the sacred *brahman,* the Vedas, the sacred "Bodies of Knowledge." They came to regard themselves as naturally more intelligent, virtuous, and pure than all the other Orders of society. Ideally, brahmins lived on what was given to them by those who used their expertise for performing rituals (*dakṣiṇā*), and they taught the Vedas to the next generation of brahmins. Some lived in exclusively brahmin settlements supported by grants from kings *(agrahāra-s).* On the other hand, many became forest sages, renouncers, and wandering holy men (who were feared always to be ready to pronounce an unfailing curse upon virtually anyone if they became annoyed). In the *MBh* some brahmins follow the kṣatriya dharma and are skilled warriors (e.g., Kṛpa and Droṇa).

Bṛhatī—A verse meter consisting of thirty-six syllables.

cakravāka—The ruddy sheldrake, or brahminy duck, *Casarca ferringinea.* According to Vogel, *The Goose in Indian Literature and Art,* "It is a handsome bird of a bright orange-brown colour, black collar round the neck, black and white wings and lower abdomen chestnut, and similar to the goose in structure. They are found on the sandy banks of the great rivers and lakes, but as a rule only in pairs. The *cakravāka* is a symbol of conjugal attachment and frequent reference is made to his grief, when he is separated from his mate during the night" (8).

caru—An oblation made of rice, barley, and pulses cooked in milk and butter.

Dharmaśāstra—The Learned Science, or Tradition, expounding dharma. The preeminent text of this tradition was the *Mānavadharmaśastra,* the "Laws of Manu," or "Manu."

dhava—A kind of tree, mentioned at 12.163.8.

Gandharva—Handsome men who play music and sing in the heavens. They are associated with the inebriating sacrificial beverage Soma, healing, sex, and gambling, as well as music and song.

gotra—A term designating lineage or family, or, in different contexts, more specially defined groupings within a multigenerational group of people. Among brahmins it designates one of forty-nine lines of biological descent from great seers.

Itihāsa—Accounts of past events and deeds.

kalala—The first of the embryonic stages of a fetus. See the note to 11.4.2.

karma—Karma is an English word based on Sanskrit *karman;* see s.v. "karma" in Appendix 5.

karṇikāra—*Cassia fistula,* the "pipe" *cassia,* the "Indian laburnum," also known as "Golden Shower." See the note to 11.19.20 for a discussion of its identification and its use in a metaphor there.

kāśa—A particular species of grass used in Vedic rituals.

khadira—*Acacia catechu,* a deciduous tree with heavy wood; see note to 12.37.33.

khaṭvāṅga—A staff that has a skull on one end and is basically a club; it is carried by Śiva (and used by him as a weapon) and by ascetics patterning themselves upon him.

Kiṃnaras—Semi-human, semi-animal beings known to the *MBh* but which have no significant presence in it.

kiṃśuka—Same as *palāśa: Butea frondosa,* Roxb., a large-leaved tree with large, usually red or orange flowers. See the note to 12.160.60.

krakaca—Some kind of musical instrument.

krośa—According to Wilson's *Glossary,* s.v. "Kos," "A measure of distance varying . . . from one to two miles, but most usually about the latter."

kṣatra—The abstract cosmic principle that underlies the use of sanctioned violence by warriors and rulers (kṣatriyas). Complementary with *brahman,* the ultimate source of the knowledge and power of brahmins.

kṣatriya—The second of the four *varṇas,* the social Orders of Brahminic society, in India. The kṣatriyas comprise the powerful, land-owning, fighting, and ruling Order of ancient India, the stratum of society from which kings and princes came (at least in theory). Their special social

function was stated as protecting society from external enemies and governing society according to dharma.

kṣaudra—Some otherwise unknown type of honey at 12.124.35.

kuśa—A particular species of grass with ritual uses in the Vedic tradition.

māgadha—Professional bard or panegyrist of the king.

Marut(s)—Wind(s); in Vedic mythology the band of winds who troop along behind the God of the monsoon storms, Indra.

Nāgas—Beings that are half-human and half-serpent.

nala—A length of approximately six feet. I follow V. S. Apte's acceptance (in *The Practical Sanskrit-English Dictionary*) of Nīlakaṇṭha's gloss at *MBh* 7, Appendix 1, no. 8, l.850 (B. 7.70.16) where he says "*nala* means 'four cubits'" (*nalaśabdaś caturhastavacanaḥ*). Arjunamiśra explains it the same way at *MBh* 12.331.47. Nīlakaṇṭha offers two other explanations at two other locations in the *MBh*; at 12.29.135 he explains it as a metrically abbreviated form of the word *nalva*, "a furlong." Reporting on a much later period of time, Wilson writes of the *nala*, "As a standard of measure it consisted of three *Iláhi-gaz* or yards of Akbar, but the length varied in practice from 7.5 to 9 feet; a larger rod was also in use varying from 26 to 33 feet; and another was known in Bengal of 400 cubits." The last-mentioned length is the traditional measure of the *nalva* ("*nalvaḥ kiṣkucatuḥśatam*," says Nīlakaṇṭha at 12.29.135).

nalva—A "furlong"; a measure of length of about 600 feet; Nīlakaṇṭha says, "*nalvaḥ kiṣkucatuḥśatam*" ("a *nalva* is four hundred cubits") at 12.29.135, echoing the *Amarakośa* according to BR. Wilson says the length is 440 cubits *(Glossary)*.

Naraka—One of the subterranean hells.

niṣad—At 12.47.16 this word is contrasted with *upaniṣad* (Upaniṣad) in the same way *vāka* is contrasted with *anuvāka*. Since the word is otherwise unknown, it seems the author has suggested the existence of *niṣad-s* as the basis of the "*upa*"-*niṣads*. For Sanskritists: The words *niṣad* and so forth are adaptations for the context of 12.47.16 of the actual Sanskrit words *niṣat* and so forth.

niṣka—A large gold coin, defined in a classic passage roughly contemporaneous with the *MBh* as four *suvarṇas*. A *suvarṇa* ("gold" piece or coin) was defined in terms of the basic commercial weight, the *kṛṣṇala* or *raktika* (respectively the black, or red, berry of *Abrus precatorius*) as eighty *kṛṣṇalas*. The exact weight of this unit is obviously difficult to specify, but the unit is still used in India (called the *ratti* or *retti*), and nineteenth-century reports on its weight at that time were from the low value of 1.6 grains troy (reported by Colebrooke, as cited in BR, s.v. "*raktika*") to 1.875 grains, or 0.122 grams (reported by Bühler in a note to his translation of Manu 8.134). Doniger and Smith, at 8.134 of their translation of Manu, state that in ancient times the *raktika* "was the smallest weight in actual use," and weighed "approximately 1.83 grains, or 0.118 grams."

palāśa—Same as *kiṃśuka*, *q.v.* Its wood was used for making vessels used in rituals.

paṇava—A kind of drum.

Pārijāta—*Erythrina indica*, the "coral tree." See the note to 11.11.19.

Piśācas—A class of fierce monsters.

prāya—A fasting unto death, sometimes, but not always, "as a religious or penitentiary act or to enforce compliance with a demand" (MW, s.v. "*prāya*").

priyaṅga—A particular creeper vine said to put forth flowers at the touch of a woman.

puṃnāga—The tree *Rottleria tinctoria*.

Purāṇa—A text that relates the "primordial" information about the cosmos, the world, the realm, and so forth.

Rākṣasa—A class of flesh-eating monsters that reach the height of their strength in the dark of night.

Rasātala—The lowest of the seven hells.

Ṛbhus—The Gods of the Gods (at *MBh* 3.247.19).

ṛc—A couplet of "praise and prayer" directed to the Gods. The basic unit of text in the *Ṛg Veda*.

Ṛg Veda—The Veda of *ṛc* verses, that is, the Veda made up of hymns that consist of verses expressing praise and prayer toward the Gods.

Sādhyas—A class of refined celestial beings often regarded as Gods and several times associated with fighting the enemies of the Gods.

śāla—*Shorea* [sometimes *Vatica*] *robusta*, a very tall, stately forest tree known for its sturdy wood.

Sāma Veda—The Veda that consists of hymns and verses of the *Ṛg Veda* set to intricate melodies (see s.v. "Veda"). The *Sāma Veda* came to be regarded as the premier Veda of the four Vedas.

sāman—An individual song of the *Sāma Veda*, *q.v.*

śamī—The tree whose wood was used to kindle the fire for Vedic rituals. *Prosopis spicigera*, according to some and *Mimosa suma* according to others.

Sāṃkhya—System of philosophy which seeks Absolute Freedom (*mokṣa*) through an intuition of the fundamental and absolute difference between the spiritual soul (of oneself) and one's psycho-corporeal being that is part of the universal psycho-corporeal continuum (Nature, *prakṛti*). The *Mokṣadharmaparvan* contains middle-age forms of this school of thought, and at some later time, probably in the late fourth or fifth century of the Christian era, one Īśvarakṛṣṇa gave this school of thought its classical expression in his *Sāṃkhya Verses* (*Sāṃkhyakārikās*).

sattra—A long (sometimes twelve, or even one hundred, years long) ritual

"session" of brahmins performing a sacrifice with Soma. In a *sattra* all the participating priests are the "consecrated" sacrificers, as opposed to a standard Soma sacrifice, in which priests perform on behalf of a single consecrated sacrificer (who does not function as a priest in the rite).

Sātvata—A name for some of the Yādavas, including the Vṛṣṇis. Kṛṣṇa came to be regarded as "*the* Sātvata," and Sātvatas became "worshippers of 'the Sātvata.'"

Siddha—A "perfected" being; a being who has attained some transcendent power or beatitude. (1) Siddhas, in the plural, are a class of celestial beings perfected through yoga and endowed with the special powers one can gain through yoga (*siddhis*, e.g., the power to shrink, or swell, oneself to whatever size one wills). (2) On earth a Siddha is a holy man, saint, or sage, especially one endowed with magical or supernatural powers.

śloka—A stanza made up of two sixteen-syllable verses in the anuṣṭubh meter. In turn, each of the stanza's two verses is made up of two metrically non-identical halves. Thus, I avoid referring to the śloka as a couplet, for the term could plausibly apply to the couple of similar half-ślokas making up the stanza, or to the couple of dissimilar quarter-stanzas that make up the half-śloka. The post-Vedic śloka, a "stanza" conceived of and discussed in terms of its four "quarters," *pādas*, is the basic unit of poetic composition employed in the *MBh* and much other post-Vedic narrative and didactic literature.

Soma—The mind-altering extract of a plant that was mixed with water and milk and offered to the Gods, and then drunk by the participants, in certain important kinds of ancient Vedic rituals. The identity of the plant has been the subject of argument and debate for the past century. The most recent and most comprehensively argued case (made by H. Falk, *Soma I and II*) convincingly reaffirms the old, frequently made argument that Soma "can only be some species of *Ephedra*, probably *Ephedra intermedia* or *Ephedra pachyclada*" (Karl F. Geldner, introducing his translation of the ninth book of the *Ṛg Veda*, which consists entirely of hymns devoted to the God Soma; 3: 2). Falk lists three other species of *Ephedra* known in the Indo-Iranian highlands that are also good sources of the active agent, ephedrine (*Ephedra major, E. gerardiana*, and *E. procera*), and he rebuts, or summarizes the rebuttals of, two recent alternative arguments that Soma was in fact (1) the "wild rue" plant, *Peganum harmala* (David S. Flattery and Martin Schwartz, *Haoma and Harmaline*), or (2) the fly agaric mushroom, *Amanita muscaria* (Gordon Wasson and Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty, *Soma: Divine Mushroom of Immortality*.) Thomas Oberlies, however, in his recent study of Soma in Vedic religion, rejects Falk's arguments in favor of Stuhrmann's argument for an alkaloid-bearing plant (Oberlies, *Die Religion des Ṛgveda*, 149).

spandana—A kind of wood which old Sanskrit lexica say is used to make beds and stools.

sphya—A flat piece of wood used for demarcating the sacrificial *vedi* on the ground and for stirring offerings.

sruc—A long wooden ladle made of *palāśa (Butea frondosa)* or *khadira (Acacia catechu)* used to pour offerings of ghee (clarified butter) into the fire.

sruva—A small wooden ladle with two bowls at its end for pouring ghee (clarified butter) into the larger ladle, the *sruc*.

śūdra—The lowest of the four *varṇas*, the social Orders of Brahminic society, in India. The śūdras are not "twice-born"; that is, they are not eligible to hear the sounds of the Veda (i.e., mantras), and thus they are not eligible to employ, or participate in, any Vedic rituals. This social Order is probably based in the people who were indigenous to India when the Indo-Europeans made their way into India in the first half of the second millennium B.C. They have no special function within Aryan, Brahminically conceived society; their particular dharma (*svadharma*) is simply to obey what any of the three superior *varṇas* command them.

Suras—The Gods, the beings opposite the Asuras. See s.v. "Asura."

sūta—A warrior's chariot-driver, who is also a bard or herald. Men who are *sūtas* were supposed to be descended from the misalliance of brahmins and kṣatriyas.

Svadhā—Ritual offering for the ancestors; also the exclamation that accompanies that offering or sometimes substitutes for it.

Svāhā—An exclamation used in making oblations to the Gods; also, Oblation personified.

svayaṃvara—A *svayaṃvara* is a "choosing for herself" of a husband by a young kṣatriya woman. Any interested kṣatriya kings and princes would come to the city of her father and array themselves before her for her choosing. As described in the *MBh*, *svayaṃvaras* were often the occasions of fighting among the gathered kṣatriyas (e.g., see 1.96, 1.174 ff., 12.4.)

udumbara—The pipal tree, the fig tree *Ficus religiosa* or *Ficus glomerata*.

uktha—A portion of a recitation (*śastra*) of the *Ṛg Veda* by the particular priest called the "chanter" (*hotṛ*) at a Vedic sacrifice.

Upaniṣad—One of the genres of the holy texts making up the Vedas. In particular, the mystical and poetic texts teaching the secret relations between different orders of being (especially, the correspondence between a person's true Self [*ātman*] and the true Self [also *ātman*] of the entire cosmos, namely *brahman*). These texts were appended to the canon of Vedic texts and were regarded as closing that canon. The Upaniṣads came also to be known as the Vedānta.

Vaikhānasa—Name of a particular sect of brahmin seers.

vaiśya—The third of the four *varṇas*, the social Orders of Brahminic

society, in India. The vaiśyas are "twice-born"; that is, they are eligible to hear and use the sounds of the Veda (i.e., mantras), in Vedic rituals. The word vaiśya signifies simply ordinary people (as opposed to the brahmins and the kṣatriyas. The function of the vaiśya Order of society is to produce abundantly the goods that all in society require (especially the brahmins, who are [ideally] not directly materially productive, and kṣatriyas). Vaiśyas are thus associated with animal husbandry, agriculture, and commerce.

vaitālika—One of a king's panegyrists.

vāka—The chanted theme in a religious song that is sung antiphonally.

Vālakhilya—Class of miniature (they are only the size of a thumb) seers perfected through asceticism who live in the circle of the sun drinking its rays (thus living by the Law of gleaning).

Vaṣaṭ—An exclamation in a Vedic sacrifice with which the chanter ends a chant, and which signals another priest to put the offering into the fire.

Vasus—An ancient grouping of eight important Gods. The list of the identities of the Vasus is not always the same, but at different times in ancient and epic phases of Sanskrit literature, such Gods as Indra, Agni, the Wind, the Moon, Light, Viṣṇu, and the Pole Star are named among the Vasus.

Veda(s)—The sacred "Body of Knowledge" upon which brahminic society and culture is based in principle. The core of the Veda, historically speaking, is the *Ṛg Veda*, the collection of over one thousand hymns (*sūktas*) which comprise over ten thousand *ṛc* couplets, each of which is a stanza praising and praying to one or more Gods (*devas*). The hymns of the *Ṛg Veda* provided the body for the *Sāma Veda*, which added intricate melodies to selected *ṛc* verses and *sūktas* of the *Ṛg Veda*. The *sūktas* of the *Ṛg Veda* also contributed greatly to the prayers that make up the formulas of the third Veda, the *Yajur Veda*, and to the hymns of the *Atharva Veda*. This latter is a more independent Vedic collection of hymns employing magic ritual for more mundane and ordinary human purposes, such as healing, ensuring safety, and so forth.

A dutiful brahmin boy should spend six to twelve years learning the one among these four basic collections that is proper to the lineage of his male ancestors, and then he should participate in sacrificial rituals (*yāgas, yajñas*) that employ selected portions of each of the Vedic collections. The portions of the Vedic collections recited or sung by priests in a sacrificial ritual (formulaic portions of texts that came to be known as mantras) were regarded as both expressing and applying the fundamental power of the universe (*brahman*), hence the power of the ritual. The knowledge, maintenance, and employment of the sacred Veda (that is, of *brahman* in the form of sound) is the primary distinguishing feature of brahmins within Indian society. The sounds of the Veda, which were emitted from the mouth of Brahmā, the creator, at the time of creation, were heard by the ancient seers *(ṛṣis)* and transmitted by them to their pupils, who passed them to their pupils on down in unbroken chains of oral transmission across all the generations to the time of the *MBh* and beyond. Once a brahmin has learned the appropriate Veda (or at least some part of it), he must maintain his learning by daily recitation of some of his text. This daily recitation (*svādhyāya*) is an important obligation of the brahmin to the seers and to the *brahman*, that is, to the holy Veda itself. Of course he is also obliged to teach what he knows of the Veda to eligible students, to employ his Vedic knowledge in his own sacrifices, and stimulate whatever patrons he can to employ him for sacrifices of their own.

vedi—The area marked out between the three fires as the "altar," or place of ritual offerings, at a Vedic sacrifice.

Viśvedevas—"All the Gods," or the "All-Gods." A group of Gods in the heavens well known in the *Ṛg Veda* and appearing occasionally in the *MBh* alongside groups of other Gods and preternatural beings.

vyāma—A measure of length. Nīlakaṇṭha says, at 12.29.110, that one *vyāma* is five hand-lengths (i.e., about a yard or a meter).

yajus—One of the numerous Vedic formulas recited quietly by the ritual priest who performs the actual ritual operations involved in a Vedic sacrifice.

yajña—The Vedic rite of sacrificial offerings to the Gods.

Yakṣa—A class of semi-divine spirits inhabiting all the special places of the earth, such as waterfalls, hills and mountains, caves, brooks and streams, remarkable trees and stones, and so forth. Kubera, in the North, in the foothills of the Himālayas, is their chief. Yakṣas are usually benevolent toward humans.

Yoga—(1) A religious regimen, typically involving ascetic self-restraint and meditative self-transformation, which a person takes up to gain the highest cosmic good for him or herself. The earliest yogas in India (those seen in the Jain religion, in the Upaniṣads of the Brahmin tradition, and in the pre-Mahāyāna forms of Buddhism) emphasized renunciation of the world (*saṃnyāsa*) and various techniques of psychic and somatic modification. These yogas were typically based upon differing, more or less clearly articulated, understandings of the world, each of which conceived of the highest cosmic good in its own particular way. On the other hand, the worldview of most of them included the idea of rebirth because of karma, and their ideas of the highest good included, or were variants of, the idea of *mokṣa*, that is, of escaping karma and thus rebirth.

(2) A particular form of yoga. A Brahminic form of yoga based upon the dualistic metaphysics of the Sāṃkhya philosophy (see separate entry). The *Mokṣadharmaparvan* contains early forms of this school of

thought. At some later time, one Patañjali codified this tradition in the classic *Yogasūtra.*

yojana—A measure of distance traveled: a "league"; said to be the amount a team can travel in one "yoking"; four *krośas;* reported in Western dictionaries to be a distance of from two and a half to nine miles.

*Concordance of Critical Edition and Bombay Edition**

The concordance is of the chapters only. It is based on the marginal references marked B in the critical edition and has been cross-checked with the *Concordanz* in Hermann Jacobi's *Mahābhārata* (Inhaltsangabe, Index und Concordanz der Calcuttaer und Bombayer Ausgaben [Bonn: Friedrich Cohen, 1903]). Since its purpose is principally to facilitate comparison with Sørensen, the "Roy" and Dutt translations, and other reference books that quote chapters by their number in B., the verse numbers of the Calcutta edition have not been collated: these numbers and their concordance with the verse numbers of the critical edition are only retrievable from the marginal figures marked in C. in the critical edition, and, mostly, from the C. figures in the summaries.

Be it noted that the concordance does not show the very numerous deletions of particular verses. For information on verse deletions, the only recourse is the *apparatus* of the critical edition.

Critical Edition	Bombay
11. 1–27	1–27
12. 1–68	1–68
69–70	69
71–116	70–115
117	116–17
118–24	118–24
125	125–26
126	127–28
127–28	129–30
129–41	131–43
142	144–46
143–49	147–53
150	154–55
151	156–57
152–67	158–73

*This concordance is an excerpt, with slight alterations, from the comprehensive concordance of the Pune and Bombay editions provided by J. A. B. van Buitenen on pages 475–78 of volume 1 of this complete translation of the *Mahābhārata.* This excerpt pertains only to Book 11 and the portion of Book 12 contained in this volume.

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*Index of Proper Names**

The Index refers to the **Book.**Chapter.Verse locations of proper names found in the translated passages contained in this book. A full reference would give book, chapter, and verse, each separated from the other by a period, and each full reference separated from any preceding reference by a semicolon. To avoid unnecessary repetition, however, the book references are only given one time each for every separate name, specifically, only for the very first reference to Book 11 and the first to Book 12. The book reference is given in bold type. All other references following a book reference are understood to be in the same book, until another book reference in bold type occurs. Chapter references are in nonbold type, and they are "re-used" in the same fashion. Chapter numbers are followed by a period and the verse reference in a smaller typeface; any additional verse references in the same chapter also appear in small type and are separated from each other by commas. If, however, a name occurs many times in a chapter, the series of verse references is truncated with "passim."

The index refers to the Sanskrit text as well as to this translation. Occasionally, in the case of a few frequently occurring names (especially uses of Bharata and Bhārata in the vocative case), the name was omitted in the translation to keep the English smooth, or rendered with another common form of the same figure's name (especially Indra for Śakra, occasionally Kuntī for Pṛthā, etc.). These omitted occurrences of the name are listed here, but they are distinguished in this list by the use of parentheses around them. On the other hand, I have occasionally transformed a pronoun or an implicit reference to a person in the text into that person's name, for the sake of the clarity of the English. Instances of

*Only the proper names of the translation are indexed; those occurring in introductions, summaries, and notes are not.

such names added to the text are listed here preceded by an asterisk. This asterisk is also employed for the few instances where a more familiar name has been substitued for a less familiar one.

If not otherwise qualified, the name Kṛṣṇa refers to Kṛṣṇa Vāsudeva.
